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THE

VISIT FOR A WEEK;

OR,

HINTS

ON THE

IMPROVEMENT OF TIME.

CONTAINING

ORIGINAL TALES, ANECDOTES FROM NATURAL AND MORAL HISTORY, &c.

DESIGNED FOR

THE AMUSEMENT OF YOUTH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE SIX PRINCESSES OF BABYLON, JUVENILE MAGAZINE,
AND
KNIGHT OF THE ROSE.

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1794.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

THE

VISIT FOR A WEEK.

CLARA and William were the ſon and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clement: Clara, who was her mother's darling, had ſcarcely attained her tenth year, when ſhe was introduced to the card table, and to every place of faſhionable reſort, at which it was poſſible to intrude a child of her age: In conſequence, ſhe grew confident and vain; pretended to give her opinion on every ſubject; and was conſidered by all as a pert, conceited, diſagreeable child: Some pitied—others laughed at her folly—but Mrs. Clement being generally known to poſſeſs that miſtaken ſort of partiality, which rendered her blind to the imperfections of her children, no one ventured to reprove, or point them out.

The time thus allotted to pleaſure, little remained for ſtudy; that little was divided between dancing and muſic, while the knowledge of her own language, French, Geography, and other eſſential branches of education, were little attended to, if not wholly neglected. A courſe of life ſo improper for her age, naturally brought along with it other inconveniencies; her conſtitution ſuffered; the roſes fled her cheeks, and Mrs. Clement too late diſcovered the ill conſequence of her imprudence; ſhe wiſhed to correct the errors ſhe had committed in her education; but found it difficult to aboliſh a ſyſtem ſhe had ſo long countenanced. How far her endeavours might have ſucceeded is uncertain, as ſhe was unexpectedly, ſeized with a complaint of which ſhe died in a few weeks.

Clara was at firſt inconſolable, but a ſhort time diſſipated her grief, and her reliſh for pleaſure returned; ſhe was then continually teizing her father to take her to the play—to let her go to Miſs ſuch a one's

one's ball—and the more her wiſhes were gratified, the more unreaſonable they grew. Mr. Clement, in vain expoſtulated, it was all to no purpoſe; Clara thought only of conſulting her own inclinations, and Mr. Clement had too long accuſtomed himſelf to yield to them.

The Mid-ſummer holydays, at length, brought William, who had for three years paſt, been fixed at a boarding-ſchool ſome miles diſtant, home, for the vacation. He was a ſprightly good natured boy, two years younger than his ſiſter, who had juſt entered her fourteenth. Till his departure for ſchool, like her, he had been much indulged, and his education neglected, but ſince that time he had been kept to his ſtudies, and his improvements had equalled, if not ſurpaſſed the expectations of his friends.

Abſence, and the loſs they had mutually ſuſtained in their mother, increaſed the affection Clara and her brother, notwithſtanding they ſometimes differed when together, entertained for each other; no-

thing therefore could be more grateful to either than this meeting.

William had been at home three days, when Mr. Clement one morning told them, with a ſmile, they judged the prelude to ſomething agreeable, that he had an excurſion in contemplation, which he doubted not would give them pleaſure.

Clara eagerly enquired to what place? but her countenance, which had the moment before been enlivened with ſmiles, was inſtantly clouded, when Mr. Clement replied—To her aunt Mills's, in Glouceſterſhire. This lady was the widow of an officer: Upon the death of her huſband, with whom ſhe ſeemed to have buried all earthly happineſs, but that which aroſe from retirement and the practice of virtue, had withdrawn to the family manſion-houſe, where, ſecluded from the gaieties of life, ſhe paſſed her time in acts of charity and devotion, and, excepting the viſits ſhe occaſionally paid to a few neighbouring families, enjoyed a ſolitude almoſt perpetual. The different taſtes and purſuits of this

lady

lady and Mrs. Clement, together with ſome ſlight miſunderſtandings, had for ſome years diſunited the families; but a few months before the death of Mrs. Clement the intimacy had been renewed. Clara and William had not, however, yet been introduced to their aunt, of whoſe character, from her attachment to retirement, they had formed no very favourable idea: the viſit was in conſequence not agreeable to either.

Mr. Clement obſerved it, but without ſeeming to do ſo, continued; "I have for ſome time paſt wiſhed to introduce you to my ſiſter; buſineſs opportunately now calls me into Worceſterſhire; I ſhall therefore drop you in my way, and call for you on my return."

Clara looked diſconcerted, and enquired with earneſtneſs, "how long they were to ſtay?"

"My buſineſs will detain me," ſaid Mr. Clement, "about a week."

"A week!" interrupted Clara, "are we to ſtay a week?"

"If I may judge by your countenance and manners, Clara," ſaid Mr. Clement, "the viſit I purpoſe does not meet your approbation; is a week ſo long a time to paſs with an amiable woman and your father's ſiſter?"

"But papa, it will be ſo dull; I have heard you ſay that my aunt keeps no company: and you know my brother ſhould have a little pleaſure in the holidays."

William echoed the ſentiments of his ſiſter, and joined in entreating his father to defer the viſit, and let them continue in town during his abſence. All, however would not do; Mr. Clement, contrary to his uſual cuſtom, withſtood the ſolicitations of his children, and notwithſtanding all they could ſay, remained inflexible.

"And when are we to go?" aſked Clara, peeviſhly?

"I deſign to ſet out to morrow morning," ſaid Mr. Clement; "and expect

that

that you will both attend me with cheerful countenances."

Clara finding it in vain to argue the point, was ſilent; but it was evident from her countenance, that this acquieſcence with her father's commands was leſs agreable to her, than as a dutiful child, it ought to have been.

As for William, who had made his objections rather out of compliment to his ſiſter, than from any diſlike to the journey, he preſently reſumed his cheerfulneſs, but Clara retired in a very ill humour to give orders for the packing her clothes.

"Pray miſs," ſaid Betty, underſtanding ſhe was going to viſit her aunt Mills, "how long may you be going to ſtay?"

"Longer than I like, I aſſure you, Betty," ſaid the young lady; "my papa is determined we ſhall ſtay a week."

"A week miſs!" exclaimed Betty, who ſaw by this, her young miſtreſs was not pleaſed with the journey; "why you will be moped to death; I wonder my maſter

can think of taking you to ſuch *an out of the way place!*"

"We ſhall have a melancholy time indeed," ſaid Clara; "but there is no ſaying any thing to papa; I never knew him ſo obſtinate in my life."

"To be ſure," ſaid Betty, "madam Mills is a very charitable good lady; but la miſs, you will be tired to death; they ſay ſhe does nothing from morning till night, but read the bible and ſay her prayers."

"And do you think that is true?" ſaid Clara, in a tone of voice that rather encouraged than checked the impertinence of her ſervant.

"To be ſure I do," ſaid Betty; "why madam Mills, they ſay, miſs, has never been in London, ſince the death of the colonel, but once, and that was at your chriſtening; ſo you may be ſure ſhe is an oddity."

"To be ſure," ſaid Clara, "ſhe has no card parties."—

"Card parties," ſaid Betty; "la bleſs you,

you, miſs, I dare ſay there is not a houſe within ſix or ſeven miles of her."

"Well," ſaid Clara; "I ſhall have a charming time of it! but there is no perſuading papa; I don't know what's come to him: ſo you muſt pack up my things; let's ſee; I ſhall take my pink luſtring and my blue ſattin ſlip: then there's my ſpotted book muſlin and my fine jaconet with ſprigs; as for the ſtriped muſlin, you will not forget that."

"La, miſs," ſaid Betty; "ſure you will not want ſo many clothes!"

"I deſire you will put up all that I tell you," ſaid Clara, ſharply; "and don't forget my cap with the blue and white feathers. The only entertainment I ſhall have, will be the pleaſure of dreſſing and undreſſing myſelf."

"Very true, miſs," ſaid Betty, who always flattered the follies of her miſtreſs, and immediately ſet about performing the orders ſhe had given.

Early the next morning the coach was at the door, and Clara, in ſpight of her

reluctance, ſet out with her father and brother for the hoſpitable manſion of Mrs. Mills, at which they arrived toward evening the next day.

It was ſituate in the moſt fruitful part of the county, on a riſing ground, one ſide of which commanded a view of diſtant hills and beautiful encloſures, and the other of a cheerful village, the inhabitants of which looked gay with health and induſtry. The reception of our travellers was the moſt tender and affectionate; Mrs. Mills embraced her nephew and niece with tears of joy, and gently chid her brother for having ſo long eſtranged her from thoſe in whom her heart was ſo deeply intereſted.

Clara and William, whoſe faults proceeded, not from a bad or inſenſible heart, but from an erroneous education, were touched with her carreſſes, and the more ſo, as they could not perceive in her countenance or manners the leaſt trace of that auſterity they had ridiculouſly attached to her character.

Mr. Clement,

Mr. Clement, whoſe buſineſs required diſpatch, ſtaied only to take a ſlight refreſhment, and again ſet forward on his journey, promiſing to render his abſence as ſhort as poſſible: for Clara, who, however reconciled to her aunt, could not overcome the diſguſt ſhe felt at the idea of paſſing a week without amuſement, ſtept aſide and privately entreated her father to *ſhorten the time of their penance.*

Reſt being the moſt deſirable after a fatiguing journey, the young folk were early conducted to bed, where they ſlept ſoundly till called upon to riſe the next morning.

William had for ſome time entertained himſelf in the garden when his aunt entered the breakfaſt-parlour; but it was not till repeatedly told, Mrs. Mills waited breakfaſt, that Clara was prevailed upon to get up and dreſs; the lady, however, received her with her uſual kindneſs, and readily accepting her apologies, they were ſoon ſeated at the breakfaſt table.

"Do you riſe every morning ſo early,

madam?" ſaid Clara, upon her aunt's obſerving that ſhe did not appear to have overcome the fatigue of her journey.

"Certainly, my dear," replied Mrs. Mills; "one muſt be wholly inſenſible to the beauties of nature, to prefer a ſtate of inactivity to the glorious contemplation of it on a fine ſummer's morning."

"I will anſwer for it," ſaid William, archly, "that my ſiſter, by her own conſent, would not riſe till ten or eleven o'clock for the fineſt ſight in the world."

Clara coloured with vexation, and darting a glance of diſpleaſure at her brother, ſaid, "he need not be ſo ſharp upon her, for it was only ſince he had been at ſchool that he was become ſuch a mighty early riſer."

William ſeeing his ſiſter's diſpleaſure, ſaid, "he did not mean to offend her," and owned "he had once been as fond of his bed as ſhe," but ſaid "it was now as great a pain to him to lie late, as it had formerly been to riſe early."

Mrs. Mills

Mrs. Mills obſerved, "that the habit of riſing early was eaſily acquired," and ſaid "ſhe could not think we were authorized by our maker to waſte thoſe precious hours in ſloth, which might be rendered beneficial to ourſelves, and uſeful to our fellow creatures."

"But do you not find the day very long, madam?" ſaid Clara.

"Not in the leaſt," returned Mrs. Mills, "on the contrary I often find it too ſhort to fulfil all the duties it neceſſarily brings along with it."

"Aſtoniſhing!" ſaid Clara; "how is it poſſible, madam, that you can employ your time? In London, where there are many things to amuſe one, I am generally tired before night."

"From this," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "I muſt judge that our amuſements and purſuits differ widely; I ſhould aſk my dear girl, in what yours conſiſt? had we time to enter upon the ſubject; but a walk before the day be too far advanced to render it ſultry, will, I think be agreeable."

The

The young folk replied, "they ſhould like it extremely, and in a few minutes, were ready to attend their good friend."

The fragrance of the breeze, the harmony of the birds, and above all the kind condeſcenſion of Mrs. Mills, conſpired to render the walk agreeable, and they continued it on the banks of a winding river, converſing on different ſubjects till the attention of Clara, whoſe obſervations did not in general extend beyond the faſhion of a cap, or the colour of a ribbon, was attracted by the ſwarms of young fiſh that appeared in the ſhallow water. "I never, in my life," ſaid ſhe, "ſaw ſuch numbers! look William, they are abſolutely innumerable; I ſuppoſe this river is remarkable for fiſh?"

"Remarkable!" ſaid William, laughing, "why you may ſee as many in every river, if you have a mind to look."

"I do not believe that," ſaid Clara; "I am ſure I never walked by one where there were ſuch quantities."

"Your attention, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Mills,

Mills, "muſt have been directed another way; William is very right, there is nothing ſingular in what you ſee; innumerable as the young fry appear, many rivers produce more abundantly than this."

"Is it poſſible!" ſaid ſhe, and added, ſtill fixing her eyes upon the water, "what prodigious quantities!"

"The encreaſe is indeed wonderful," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "but what may not be expected when a ſingle fiſh is capable of producing millions of its ſpecies."

"Millions!" exclaimed William and his ſiſter at the ſame inſtant, "did you ſay millions?"

"I did," replied Mrs Mills; "the cod produces at a birth, eight or nine millions; the flounder above a million; the mackerel five hundred thouſand; and as for the herring, Mr. Buffon, a great naturaliſt, ſuppoſes that if a ſingle one was left to multiply undiſturbed for twenty years, it would produce a progeny more numerous than the inhabitants of ten ſuch globes, as this we live upon."

'Amazing"

"Amazing" ſaid Clara, "and how many different ſorts of fiſh do you think there are, aunt?"

"To the beſt of my recollection," replied Mrs. Mills, "naturaliſts deſcribe upwards of four hundred, but it is ſuppoſed that many more have eſcaped obſervation."

"I wonder for my part," ſaid William, "they do not ſtop the courſe of the rivers."

"The greater part," reſumed Mrs. Mills, "are confined to the ſea, and would expire in freſh water; but ſuch is their aſtoniſhing increaſe, that the ocean itſelf would be too limited to contain them, did not the exiſtence of one ſpecies depend on the deſtruction of another."

"What do they eat one another?"

"Yes;" replied Mrs. Mills, "it is computed that ſcarcely one in five thouſand eſcapes the perils of its youth: the young fiſh become the prey of the older, and thoſe that eſcape, in their turn, devour ſuch as are ſmaller than themſelves."

William was going to reply, but was prevented

prevented by his ſiſter, who exclaimed, "what a leap that fiſh gave! I declare it made me ſtart; did you obſerve, madam, it jumpt quite out of the water?"

"Yes," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "but if you admire agility, what will you ſay to the ſalmon, which is frequently ſeen to throw itſelf up cataracts and precipices many yards high."

"Is that poſſible?"

"It is a fact well known," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "the generality of fiſh, as I before obſerved to you, are confined to the ſea; but a few quit the ſea at certain ſeaſons, to depoſite their ſpawn in the gravelly beds of rivers: of this kind is the ſalmon, which upon theſe occaſions will ſwim up rivers five hundred miles from the ſea, and not only brave various enemies, but ſpring up cataracts and precipices of an amazing height, that interrupt its progreſs."

"How ſurprizing!"

"And are they as anxious to return to the ſea?" aſked William.

"Yes,"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Mills, "equally ſo; were they confined to the freſh water longer than the time nature has appointed for the preſervation of their ſpecies, it is proved, by experience, that they become ſickly, pine away, and expire the ſecond year: the ſalmon, therefore, has no ſooner depoſited her eggs, which ſhe does with great care in the gravelly bottom of the river, than ſhe returns to the ſea, if ſhe eſcapes the various ſnares laid for her by the fiſhermen."

"Pray, aunt," ſaid William, where is the ſalmon moſtly caught?"

"We are chiefly," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "ſupplied with this delicious fiſh from the rivers Tweed and Tyne; from whence it is no uncommon thing for a boat load to be taken at one draught. The trade of Berwick, a town on the borders of Scotland, and of Colraine, in Ireland, conſiſts wholly in this article. A great quantity of the ſalmon annually caught is conſumed freſh, and the reſt is ſalted or pickled, and ſent beyond ſea."

"It is a little hard, poor fellows," ſaid Clara, "to be caught, after making ſo long a voyage, and encountering ſo many difficulties. How many miles, Madam, did you ſay they will ſwim from the ſea?

"It is ſaid," replied Mrs. Mills, "they will ſwim up rivers five hundred miles from it; but theſe voyages are nothing, when compared with thoſe made by fiſh of another deſcription: What do you think of the *herring*, which viſit us every year from the furtheſt extremity of the North?"

"Why, do they, aunt?"

"Innumerable ſhoals of herrings," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "live in the ſeas near the North Pole, which at certain ſeaſons they quit, and deſcend in multitudes upon our coaſts."

"They are great travellers indeed," ſaid William. "I am ſtudying geography."

"The cauſe of their leaving that retreat, where the ſeverity of the climate ſecures them from the attacks of various enemies, is not aſcertained: Some authors think their numbers oblige them to emigrate.

grate; others, that they take theſe long voyages to avoid the large fiſh that inhabit the frozen ocean; but the opinion more generally entertained is, that having exhauſted the ſtock of inſect-food, with which thoſe ſeas abound, they travel ſouthward in purſuit of a freſh ſupply, which awaits them at the time of their arrival in the Britiſh Channel. Whatever be the cauſe, this perilous expedition ſeems to be undertaken with general conſent, and performed with the utmoſt regularity. They aſſemble before they ſet out; ſeparate into diſtinct ſhoals, and during the voyage not a ſtraggler is ſeen from the general body. In June the main body arrives on our coaſts; and though it has ſuffered much from the greedy inhabitants of the deep, many of which are ſaid to devour barrels at a yawn, is ſo numerous as to alter the very appearance of the ocean, being divided into diſtinct columns, five or ſix miles in length, and three or four broad."

"They

"They muſt make fine work for the fiſhermen," ſaid William.

"The Dutch," replied Mrs. Mills, "chiefly monopolize the herring fiſhery: The Engliſh, however, yearly export great quantities, which are pickled, ſmoaked, and ſent to different parts of Europe."

As Mrs. Mills and her young friends converſed thus, the ſky became ſuddenly overcaſt, and they were glad to take ſhelter from a ſhower, beneath the branches of a ſpreading elm. Clara was extremely diſcompoſed at the thoughts of being wet, and ſaid ſhe was ſure ſhe ſhould get her death of cold, beſide ſpoiling her new bonnet the firſt time of putting it on.

"I hope neither of theſe misfortunes will happen," ſaid Mrs. Mills, with her uſual cheerfulneſs: "This tree will afford us ſhelter for ſome time; and the ſhower is too violent to continue."

"Ah," ſaid Clara, "it does not look as if it would ceaſe: See it already begins to drip through the tree. Dear, what ſhall

we

we do? I'm ſure I ſhall get my death of cold."

"Do not alarm yourſelf, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Mills. "When a misfortune cannot be avoided, the wiſeſt way is to ſubmit to it with patience, and not to make it greater, by the ſuppoſition of evils that may never arrive, or if they do, that you cannot prevent."

As Mrs. Mills ſaid this, they ſaw a little girl haſtening to them, with a bundle almoſt as big as herſelf. "How do you do, Peggy?" ſaid Mrs. Mills, when ſhe came up to them.

The little girl made her beſt curtſey, and untying the bundle, "Pleaſe you, my Lady," ſaid ſhe, "I ſaw you under the tree, as I came from ſchool; ſo I made haſte home, and have brought you my mother's riding hood." Saying this, Peggy produced a long camblet cloak, with a hood large enough for an umbrella.—"Here is one too," ſaid ſhe, "for young madam; and if maſter would pleaſe to put on this coat."

"Thank

"Thank you, my good girl," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "theſe accommodations are very ſeaſonable indeed."

Peggy then added; "My mother ſends her duty to your Ladyſhip, and ſays, if you would pleaſe to ſtep to our cottage, I could go and tell Mr. John to come with the coach: ſhe would have brought the things herſelf, but ſhe has ſcalded her foot."

"Your mother is very conſiderate," ſaid the Lady. "I am ſorry for her accident, and think we cannot do better than accept her invitation, as we are ſo far from home. What ſay you, my dears? Dame Bartlet's cottage is at hand; we can wait there till the ſhower is over, and the wet a little dried off the ground."

The young folk conſented, and being equipt in the things Peggy had brought, made the beſt of their way to the cottage, where every thing wore the appearance of neatneſs and induſtry.

Dame Bartlet, who, upon their entrance, was ſpinning, ſaid, ſhe hoped Mrs. Mills would not take it amiſs that ſhe did not

get

get up to receive her; but that ſhe ſuppoſed Peggy had mentioned her accident, or it muſt ſeem very ſtrange that ſhe did not come in perſon to offer her ſervices.

Mrs. Mills replied, that the attention ſhe had ſhewn was quite ſufficient, and obliged her extremely.

"Ah! Madam," returned Dame Bartlet, "it would be very ſtrange indeed, if me or my girl were wanting in any duty to a lady who has been ſo good to us."

Mrs. Mills now enquired into the ſtate of Dame Bartlet's foot, and recommended the treatment ſhe thought ſalutary, deſiring ſhe would, in the afternoon, ſend Peggy to her for ſome balſam to apply to it. She then made enquiries after ſeveral ſick villagers, which, ſhe ſaid, it was her deſign that day to viſit, had not the rain prevented, her walk being extended ſo far. Clara, in the mean while, who had never before ſeen a ſpinning wheel, was attentively ſurveying Dame Bartlet's. She admired with what dexterity the good woman drew the thread from the diſtaff, and

declared

declared ſhe thought it muſt be a very pretty amuſement.

"It was once," replied Mrs. Mills, "an employment in repute among perſons of the firſt rank; at preſent it is, in general, confined to the lower and middling claſs of people, for many of whom the diſtaff provides a comfortable ſubſiſtence."

An hour-glaſs, which ſtood in the window, was not leſs the object of William's attention; it was the firſt he had ever ſeen, and, before he enquired, he ventured many conjectures upon what might be its uſe. When Mrs. Mills explained to him in what manner it was calculated to meaſure time, he obſerved, that the people who invented it muſt have *very little brains*, for that it was not half ſo convenient as a watch.

"I agree with you," ſaid Mrs. Mills, that it is not ſo convenient as a watch; but cannot agree that the firſt inventor of the hour-glaſs diſcovered the leaſt want of ingenuity.—Tell me, William, were you in an iſland where no watch or clock could

be procured, what ſhould you think of the hour-glaſs?"

"I believe, aunt," ſaid William, a little aſhamed of what he had ſaid, "I ſhould think it a great treaſure; for I fancy it would be long enough before I ſhould be able to make a watch or a clock."

"You ſee then," returned Mrs. Mills, "that we muſt not always deſpiſe an invention for its ſimplicity, and that the value of things depend much upon time, place, and circumſtance. It was long before the hour-glaſs fell into diſuſe, from the diſcovery of a more convenient mode of meaſuring time. In the firſt ages of Greece, it was cuſtomary for a perſon appointed to the office, to aſcend an eminence every day, in the midſt of the city, and proclaim that the ſun had reached the higheſt point of the heavens; in other words, that it was noon. Sun-dials were afterwards invented, and in time gave place to ſtill greater improvements. Clocks, though much inferior to thoſe now in uſe, were produced, and in time carried to the

perfection

perfection you ſo much admire. With reſpect to our own country, the ingenious art of clock-making was introduced into it, in 1622, by Hugens, a native of Holland."

At this moment Peggy, who had for ſome time diſappeared, re-entered with a baſket of mulberries ſhe had been gathering.

"I ſee, Peggy," ſaid Mrs. Mills, as the good girl ſet them before the young folk, "that you ſtill love to oblige."

Peggy's eyes ſparkled with pleaſure—ſhe bluſhed—courteſied—ſmiled, and ſaid ſhe wiſhed they had ſomething better to offer.

Clara and her brother, who were extremely fond of mulberries, immediately fell to; while Mrs. Mills, obſerving that the rain had ceaſed, ſaid ſhe would ſtep to poor Suſan Milſtone's: "For," ſaid ſhe, "I hear the loſs of her huſband ſets heavy on her."

"Ay, marry does it," ſaid Dame Bartlet; "ſhe has never held up her head

ſince poor Ralph died. It is a pity ſhe takes on ſo—ſhe does nothing but cry—neglects her work; and as to her poor children, they would make your heart ache; ſhe takes no thought of them."

"This is a ſad account indeed," replied the lady, "I will go and ſee what can be done."

"Ah! Madam," ſaid Dame Bartlet, "you carry comfort wherever you go."

During the abſence of Mrs. Mills, Clara and her brother finiſhed the mulberries, and gathered from Dame Bartlet, whoſe grateful heart longed to utter the praiſes of her benefactreſs, that ſhe was indebted to Mrs. Mills for the cottage, with all that it contained, and indeed, ſhe added, for every bleſſing ſhe enjoyed: She was going, in the warmth of her heart, to enter into farther particulars, had ſhe not been prevented by the return of the lady.

"May I be ſo bold, Madam," ſaid the good woman, "as to aſk how you found poor Suſan?"

"I

"I found her," replied Mrs. Mills, "as you deſcribed, buried in grief; but have, I truſt, left her more reconciled to her misfortunes."

At this inſtant a little girl broke abruptly into the cottage. "O joy, joy, neighbour Bartlet," ſaid ſhe, "mammy ſays ſhe will go to work to-morrow, and Madam Mills ſays Jane and I ſhall go to ſchool—and"—The child ſtopt, ſeeing her benefactreſs, and drew back confuſed.

The reader need not be told this was one of the poor woman's children whom the benevolent Lady had juſt viſited.

Mrs. Mills, whoſe benevolence was always performed in ſecret, unwilling the ſubject ſhould be further inveſtigated, ſmiled affably on the child, and obſerving that the day was far advanced, bade farewel to Peggy and her mother, and haſtily left the cottage, followed by her nephew and niece.

In the courſe of their walk home, an expreſſion unguardedly eſcaped Clara, which ſtrongly conveyed, that ſhe thought her

aunt condeſcended very much in viſiting and ſpeaking, in ſuch familiar terms, to perſons whoſe ſtation in life was ſo much beneath her own.

Mrs. Mills immediately entered upon this ſubject, and obſerved in reply: "That, in the eye of God, we are all equal: He commands us," ſaid ſhe, "to love our neighbour as ourſelves without any previous diſtinction, whether he be poor or rich, a mechanic or a gentleman."

"*To love our neighbour as ourſelves*" returned Clara pertly: "Do you think there ever was an inſtance of any one loving another as well as himſelf?"

"Many," ſaid Mrs. Mills: "Hiſtory abounds with examples that demonſtrate the exiſtence of ſuch virtue. If you are at all acquainted with hiſtory, you cannot forget the friendſhip of Damon and Pythias, nor the noble conduct of Leonidas, and many hero's of antiquity, who devoted themſelves to death for the ſervice of their country."

Clara

Clara, aſhamed to confeſs that ſhe was totally unacquainted with hiſtory, was ſilent; but William, who was better informed, acknowledged that thoſe heroes might truly be ſaid to love others as well, nay better, than themſelves; but added, it was a long time ſince they lived.

"It is not on that account," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "the leſs true that they did exiſt, and that the events recorded happened; but I could bring many examples from modern hiſtory to prove that it is poſſible to love our neighbour as ourſelves; nay, I can cite one, from a people we hold uncivilized, which happened within theſe laſt fifty years. Did you ever hear of the cataract of Niagara?"

"Never," replied Clara.

"Nor you, William?"

"Never."

"Well then," ſaid Mrs Mills; "imagine to yourſelves an immenſe river, encreaſed by a number of lakes or rather ſeas falling perpendicular from a rock

one hundred and thirty ſeven feet high, and you will form an idea of the cataract of Niagara."

"I do think," ſaid William, "I recollect Mr. Smyth, our geographical maſter's deſcribing it: is it not in Canada, a province of North America?"

"It is," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "and is eſteemed one of the greateſt curioſities in the world; for two leagues above the great fall, the river is interrupted by a variety of leſſer falls, and runs with ſuch rapidity, that the largeſt canoe would be overturned in an inſtant. Higher up the river is navigable, as you will find by the ſtory I am going to relate.

"Two Indians went out one day in their canoe, at a ſufficient diſtance from the cataract, to be, as they imagined, out of danger; but having drank too frequently of ſome brandy they unfortunately had with them, the fumes of it created a drowſineſs, and they were ſo imprudent as to ſtretch themſelves at the bottom of the an oe, where they fell aſleep.

"The

"The canoe, in the mean time, which they had been towing againſt the ſtream, drove back further and further, and would in a very ſhort time have precipitated them down the fall, had not the noiſe of it, which is heard at the diſtance of ſix, and at certain times, fifteen leagues, awakened them. Figure to yourſelves, my dear children, what muſt have been the feelings of the poor creatures at this moment; and how dearly they repented the intemperance which had hurried them into ſuch danger. They exclaimed in an agony not to be expreſſed, that they were loſt; but exerted their ſtrength to work the canoe towards an iſland, which lies at the brink of the fall. Upon this, exhauſted with labour and fatigue they at length landed; but upon reflection were ſenſible that unleſs they could find means to eſcape from this iſland, they had only exchanged one kind of death for another, ſince they muſt unavoidably periſh with hunger; the ſituation of the iſland, however, gave them ſome hopes; the lower

end of it touches the edge of the precipice from whence the water falls, and divides the cataract into two parts; a ſpace is conſequently left between, where no water falls, and the rock is ſeen naked. Neceſſity ſupplied them with invention; they formed a ladder of the bark of the linden tree, and faſtening one end of it to a tree that grew at the edge of the precipice, deſcended by it to the water below, into which they threw themſelves, thinking, as it was not rapid in this part, to ſwim to ſhore."

"Had it been my caſe," ſaid Clara, "I ſhould rather have died of hunger in the iſland, than have attempted my eſcape that way."

"The Indians," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "acted more wiſely: while hope remains, it is our duty to exert our efforts to avert the misfortune that threatens us, when unavoidable, it is the higheſt wiſdom to bear it with fortitude and reſignation."

"And

"And did they reach the ſhore, aunt?" ſaid William.

"No," replied Mrs. Mills; "the waters of the two cataracts, (for you know I told you one part of the fall was on one ſide of the iſland, and the other on the other) meeting, formed an eddy which, when they began to ſwim, threw them back with violence againſt the rock. They made repeated trials, but with the ſame ill ſucceſs, till at length worn out with fatigue, their bodies much bruiſed, and the ſkin in many parts torn off, from the violence with which they were conſtantly thrown againſt the rock, they were forced to clime up the ladder again, into the iſland, from which they now thought nothing but death could deliver them.

"Their hopes once more revived, when they perceived ſome Indians on the oppoſite ſhore. By ſigns and cries, they at laſt drew their attention; but ſuch was the perilous ſituation of the iſland, that though they ſaw and pitied them, they gave them ſmall hopes of aſſiſtance. The governor of

the foot, however, being acquainted with their ſituation, humanely conceived a project for their deliverance. He reflected that the water on the eaſtern ſide of the iſland, notwithſtanding it's rapidity, is ſhallow, and thought by the help of long poles pointed with iron, it might be poſſible to walk to the iſland. The difficulty was to find a perſon with ſufficient courage and generoſity to attempt their reſcue at the hazard of his own life."

"Indeed," ſaid Clara; "if their deliverance depended upon that, I ſhould have thought ſmall hope remained of it."

"It was nevertheleſs effected," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "two generous Indians undertook to execute the governor's project, reſolving to deliver their poor brethren, or to periſh in the attempt."

"Is it poſſible? Said William; "what noble ſouls!"

"Yes," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "they prepared for their perilous expedition, and took leave of all their friends, as if they had been going to death: each was furniſhed

niſhed with two poles pointed with iron, which they ſet to the bottom of the ſtream, to keep them ſteady and ſupport them againſt the current, which muſt otherwiſe have carried them along with it. In this manner they proceeded, and actually arrived at the iſland, where delivering two of the poles to the poor Indians, who had now been nine days upon the iſland, and were almoſt ſtarved to death, they all four returned ſafe to the ſhore they had left."

"What a providential eſcape!" ſaid William; "how rejoiced the poor fellows muſt have been to receive the poles that were to aſſiſt them in getting away!"

"Their joy" ſaid Mrs. Mills, "on the proſpect of their deliverance, muſt certainly have been great, but I will venture to affirm, it did not exceed that, of the generous Indians, who hazarded their lives to effect it."

"It muſt certainly," ſaid William, "have given them great pleaſure, but what a riſk they ran!

"True,"

"True" ſaid Mrs. Mills, "but on the other hand, what a gratification! do you think there could be a pleaſure equal to that felt by the generous Indians, when they effected the deliverance of their poor country-men."

"They were certainly noble creatures," ſaid Clara, "one does not often hear, even in civilized countries, of perſons who act ſo diſintereſtedly."

"Though inſtances of ſuch generoſity," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "do not occur daily, they are, nevertheleſs, more frequent than we are aware of.

"Do you think ſo?" ſaid William."

"Yes;" replied Mrs. Mills, "the moſt generous actions, are performed in ſecret, and ſhun the noiſe of public fame; on this account, it is, that they do not ſo often come under our obſervation. I know, nevertheleſs, of ſeveral that might be put into competition with this, I have juſt recited: one in particular, at this moment, occurs to my remembrance."

"Dear

"Dear Aunt," ſaid William, and his ſiſter, at the ſame inſtant, "do relate it?"

"The fact I allude to," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "happened within theſe ſeven or eight years in France, at a place called Noyon. Four men, who were employed in cleanſing a common ſewer, upon opening a drain, were ſo affected by the fœtid vapours, that they were unable to return. The lateneſs of the hour (for it was eleven at night) rendered it difficult to procure aſſiſtance, and the delay muſt have been fatal, had not a young girl, a ſervant in the family, with courage and humanity, that would have done honour to the moſt elevated ſtation, at the hazard of her own life, attempted their deliverance. This generous girl, who was only 17 years of age, was, at her requeſt, let down ſeven different times, to the poor men, by a rope, and was ſo fortunate as to ſave two of them pretty eaſily; but, in tying the third to a rope, which was let down to her for that purpoſe, ſhe found her breath failing, and was ſo much affect-

ed

ed by the vapour, as to be in danger of ſuffocation. In this dreadful ſituation, ſhe had the preſence of mind to tye herſelf by her hair to the rope, and was drawn up almoſt expiring with the poor man, in whoſe behalf ſhe had ſo humanely exerted herſelf.

"I will anſwer for it," ſaid Clara, "ſhe had not courage to venture down for the other."

"You are miſtaken," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "far from being intimidated, the moment ſhe recovered her ſpirits, ſhe inſiſted upon being let down for the poor creature that remained, which ſhe actually was; but her exertions at this time failed of ſucceſs; the poor man being drawn up dead."

"Is this really a true ſtory?" ſaid Clara. "It is an undoubted fact," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "the corporation of the town of Noyon, as a ſmall token of their approbation, preſented the generous girl with 600 livres, and conferred on her, the civic crown, with a medal, engraven with the arms

arms of the town, her name, and a narrative of the actions. It is alſo ſaid, that the Duke of Orleans ſent her 500 livres, and ſettled 200 yearly on her for life.

" But to return," ſaid Mrs. Mills, to our firſt point: theſe, and many more examples of the ſame kind, that I could prove, that when our bleſſed Lord commands us to love our neighbour as ourſelves, he does not exact that which is beyond the ability of his creatures to perform.

" Why, to be ſure," ſaid Clara, " both the Indians and the generous girl, you have juſt mentioned, may truly be ſaid to love their neighbour as themſelves; but it is much more eaſy to admire than to imitate.

" Very true, Clara," replied William, " I am ſure, though I ſhould have pitied the poor men in danger of ſuffocation, and the Indians who were left on the iſland, I never ſhould have had courage to deliver them at the riſk of my own life."

" Had you thought it your duty, my dear William," ſaid Mrs. Mills, " to hazard

hazard your life, in ſuch a cauſe, I hope God, (without whoſe aſſiſtance, we can do nothing,) would have given you ſtrength and courage to perform it; we are not all called to a ſtation of ſuch danger, though all to diſplay our love to our neighbour, according to our ſituation and ability. We who are bleſt with affluence, more immediately in acts of charity and benificence. Nor is this alone ſufficient; we muſt bear with the infirmities of our neighbour, reprove his faults with mildneſs; comfort him in his affliction; and be at all times ready to rejoice in and promote his felicity. Nor are opportunities, wanting in which the poor, as well as the rich, may ſhew their obedience to the divine command: Peggy Bartlet, whom we have juſt left, is an example of this; you would ſcarcely credit, of what conſequence that poor child is to the whole neighbourhood: If a neighbour fall ſick, Peggy is immediately at hand, to run for the Doctor to quiet the children, or to perform any little office of kindneſs within her power.

If

If ſhe is from ſchool, and unemployed by her mother, the wheel of Dame Grimſtone, their next neighbour, who has a large family, never ſtands ſtill. If any difference happen among her companions, Peggy is the firſt to ſet on foot a reconciliation; and as for the children of Robert Gould, a poor labourer, who lives within a few doors of them, Peggy has already taught two of them to read, and a third nearly to ſay the alphabet. In ſhort, ſhe never lets ſlip an opportunity, in which ſhe can render herſelf uſeful, and by this means, does more good within her little circle, than thoſe, whoſe abilities are more extenſive.

"I liked her," ſaid William, "from the very firſt; ſhe looked ſo good-natured, and was ſo civil."

"Yes," returned Mrs. Mills, "and her civility ſprings wholly from the goodneſs of her heart."

"Is her father alive?" aſked Clara.

"No," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "he died

When

when ſhe was ſcarcely a twelvemonth old, leaving his widow in great diſtreſs."

"Ah!" ſaid William, "now I underſtand; you have taken care of them ever ſince. Dame Bartlet told us, that, next to God, ſhe owed every thing to you, aunt."

"You are miſtaken, my dear William," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "my knowledge of Peggy and her mother has been recent. It is not more than two years ſince an event, in which the goodneſs of their hearts were ſignally diſplayed, recommended them to my notice, and gave riſe to thoſe little ſervices which their gratitude ſo far overrates."

"Pray, aunt," ſaid Clara, "what was the circumſtance?"

"To anſwer your queſtion," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "I muſt enter into a detail longer than the preſent time will permit."

"O now," ſaid William, "you have raiſed our curioſity. Do tell us—I know it is ſomething intereſting."

"My dear boy," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "we are already at home—another time—"

Before

Before ſhe could finiſh the ſentence, the gate opened, and Clara, upon entering the hall, perceived the hand of the clock upon the ſtroke of three; little time remained for the toilet: ſhe haſtened into her dreſſing room, and found it was poſſible to complete that which commonly took up two hours, equally as well in twenty minutes.

Dinner being over, and the deſſert removed, the young folk, who had not forgotten the ſubject of their laſt converſation, again renewed it, and requeſted Mrs. Mills to recount the circumſtance that firſt recommended Peggy Bartlet to her notice.

"My dear children," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "ſince you deſire it, I ſhall willingly ſatisfy your curioſity, though my narrative may afford you ſmall entertainment. Saying this, ſhe began

THE LITTLE VILLAGER.

"As near as I can recollect, it is about two years ſince I every day obſerved a little girl,

girl, clean, but very meanly dreſſed, regularly croſs the field, which lies contiguous to my orchard. She had commonly a baſket upon her arm, and made her way with ſuch haſte, that my curioſity was excited, and I aſked Banks, my woman, to which of the villagers the child belonged.

" Banks replied, that ſhe had herſelf obſerved her, and more than once made the ſame enquiry, but had not gained any ſatisfactory account of her.

" This intereſted me ſtill further; and I deſired Banks, the next time ſhe paſſed, to accoſt her.—Whether this was through negligence omitted, or that the girl took another road, I know not, but I heard no tidings of her for three days; when having extended my morning walk beyond its uſual limits, I ſaw her, with her little baſket, ſome yards before me, croſs a retired path, into which I had juſt turned, and make towards a hut, that was nearly concealed by two large elms. I quickened my pace, and overtook her the moment

ſhe

ſhe opened the door—But what a ſcene of miſery ſtruck my ſight! A man, apparently on the point of expiring, deſtitute of every neceſſary comfort, lay on the ground and by him ſat a woman, in the prime of life, whom grief and diſeaſe ſeemed to have reduced nearly to the ſame condition. A languid ſmile animated the features of each, upon the entrance of the girl, who affectionately enquired how they had paſſed the night?

"The poor man ſhook his head, and a deep ſigh from the woman explained too clearly that they could not anſwer the queſtion to the wiſhes of their little friend; who, having ſympathized with them a moment in ſilence, uncovered her baſket, and ſaid, ſhe hoped they could eat an egg, as ſhe had brought a couple newly laid.

"An expreſſive glance from the poor man told his gratitude, and the woman preſſing the hand of the girl, exclaimed, 'Ah! Peggy, you and your good mother, I am ſure, half ſtarve yourſelves on our account;

account; it is a cruel thing that we muſt make you partake our miſery!'

"Do not ſay ſo," ſaid the little girl, 'I bring you nothing but what we can very well ſpare—and—'

"O yes,' ſaid the poor woman, 'ſo you would make us believe. This mattreſs and theſe blankets you can very well ſpare, though we know you have nothing but a rug and the ground for yourſelves!'

"Do not be uneaſy about that," ſaid the child, 'we ſleep much eaſier upon the rug than we ſhould on the mattreſs, if we knew you wanted one.' Saying this, ſhe threw off her cloak, and taking ſome dry ſticks out of her baſket, ſet them alight in the chimney, and prepared to boil the eggs. The door being half ſhut, I had continued an unſeen ſpectator of all that paſſed; I now thought it time to enter, and gave a ſoft rap.

"I underſtood, in general terms, upon my entrance, that a ſeries of misfortunes had reduced this unhappy pair to their preſent miſerable condition; but it was not

not a time to require particulars; their situation called for immediate redreſs."

"And I am ſure, aunt," ſaid William, "you did not refuſe it."

"If I had, William, I muſt have been unworthy the affluence with which Providence has bleſſed me," ſaid Mrs. Mills: "but with reſpect to the poor man, aſſiſtance came too late; notwithſtanding the humane exertions of Mr. Benſon, our apothecary, who, at my requeſt, went immediately, he did not ſurvive till the next morning; and grief encreaſed the fever of the woman ſo much, that it was not till ſome days after, Mr. Benſon could give hopes of her recovery. Time and reflection, however, compoſed her mind; the fever abated, and ſhe gathered ſtrength daily. As ſhe had been removed to my houſe, I had frequent opportunities of ſeeing her, and thought I obſerved in her ſomething above the vulgar; not that there was any thing in her deportment unbecoming or inconſiſtent with an humble ſtation; but her ſentiments, though plain and

unadorned, were expreſſed with a propriety ſeldom met with in low life: She appeared to be well acquainted with the Scriptures and with ſeveral books of divinity, and an unaffected ſtrain of piety prevailed in her diſcourſe, that intereſted me very much.

"On expreſſing, one day, my ſurprize to find her ſo well informed, ſhe replied; 'Ah, Madam! the little I know I owe all to a dear young lady, with whom I was ſo happy as to paſs my youth.'

"I deſired ſhe would be more explicit, and ſhe continued: 'My father was a poor labourer on the eſtate of Sir James Ramſden, whoſe lady, when I was twelve years old, took me into the family to wait upon Miſs Frances, her youngeſt daughter, at that time juſt ſeven years of age. Never ſure was ſeen ſo ſweet a child! At thoſe early years ſhe diſcovered a ſenſe of religion, ſeldom met with at a riper age: She would frequently repeat little extempore prayers, and divine ſtanzas, which ſhewed the heavenly turn of her mind.

As

As ſhe grew up, her ſole delight was in reading the Scriptures and other books of divinity, or in performing acts of charity and devotion. How often, while other young ladies have been engaged at the card-table, or places of public diverſion, has ſhe paſſed her time, in inſtructing me in the word of God, and the duties of my ſtation! Yes, Madam, it is to her kindneſs alone that I owe the happineſs of being able to read the Word of God in his Holy Scriptures, from whence I have drawn all the conſolation that has ſupported me in my afflictions. A malignant fever carried her off in the bloom of health and beauty; at eighteen ſhe died univerſally lamented *. —But I beg your pardon, Madam, ſaid the poor woman, I am tedious.'

"I aſſured her that I thought otherwiſe: The moſt trifling incidents, I obſerved, when they related to a character ſo exemplary, could not fail of intereſting the hearer. She then, at my requeſt, acquainted me with what afterwards befel

* The author has the pleaſure to inform her readers, that the above is not an imaginary, but a real character.

her, and, to the beſt of my remembrance, went on thus:

"Time, Madam, reconciled me to the loſs of my dear young lady; but the precepts I had ſo often received from her mouth, and ſeen enforced by her example, as the Pſalmiſt ſays, "*were written on the tablets of my heart,*" and I can with truth ſay, "that I have found them *more precious than gold or fine raiment.*" I continued in the family of Lady Ramſden till I married my late huſband, an honeſt induſtrious man, who rented a ſmall farm thirty miles diſtant. For the firſt ſix years after our marriage, every thing went on well, and we were getting forward in the world apace; but, unfortunately for us, our landlord died ſuddenly, and the perſon into whoſe hands the farm fell, not only refuſed to renew our leaſe, which was nearly expired, but inſiſted upon ſuch an enormous advance of rent, that my huſband thought it prudent to quit the farm.

"We took Harley farm, which you know, Madam, is within a mile of the next

next village. The rent was higher than that we formerly paid, but my huſband thought, by attention and induſtry, to make it anſwer; and I am ſure, poor ſoul! he did not ſpare that: but indeed, ſaid Mrs. Brown, with tears in her eyes, we ſeemed to have left all our good fortune at the old farm; the ſoil of the new one proved unfruitful, and, in ſpight of all my huſband's labour, produced ſuch poor crops, that we loſt conſiderably the two firſt years. We conſoled ourſelves with the hopes that the next would be better (for we had taken a long leaſe of the farm) but we were diſappointed, and ſome ſtables belonging to our next neighbour, unfortunately taking fire communicated to our granary, where it did us conſiderable damage before it could be extinguiſhed. Theſe, and other loſſes, prevented my huſband's making his regular payments, and preyed ſo much upon his mind, that it greatly affected his health, and a cold, which he caught about this time, falling upon his

lungs, laid the foundation for the diſeaſe that put an end to his life.

" In ſhort, things grew worſe and worſe; we found ourſelves every year more involved; and our arrears with our landlord being conſiderable, he took poſſeſſion of our effects, and we were turned into the world deſtitute. As we had neither money nor friends, we could expect ſupport only from our own labour, and, weak as he was, my huſband determined to ſet out immediately for a farm about four miles off, where he had been told hands were much wanted. In ſhort, Madam, we ſet out, but in the way my poor huſband grew ſo bad, that he could not proceed: he fainted, and when he recovered, I thought it a great bleſſing that the ſhed in which you, Madam, diſcovered us was at hand to receive him. He crawled to it, thinking to ſtay there till his ſtrength returned; but, poor ſoul, he grew worſe and worſe. The little money we had, which amounted only to a few ſhillings, was ſoon expended: want ſtared us in the face, and I ſet

out

out for the village I had left to ſeek employment. You will wonder, Madam, that I did not ſeek it upon the ſpot; and, I am aſhamed to ſay, that I was withheld by pride. I knew it muſt lead to a diſcovery of our miſerable retreat, which I had hitherto carefully concealed, by going for the few neceſſaries we wanted at night.

"I had ſcarcely entered the village when I was met by Peggy Bartlet, the little girl whom you condeſcended the other day to notice: ſhe is the daughter of a poor widow, to whom in better days I had rendered ſome little ſervices. The poor child threw her arms round my neck overjoyed, and run to tell her mother, who weeds, ſpins, chares, or any way earns a penny to ſupport herſelf and child, that I was there. The poor woman upbraided me kindly for having left the village, without ſaying where I was going, and ſaid, ſhe had determined to leave work that evening earlier than uſual, to enquire me

out, and ſee if ſhe could not do any thing for us.

" I am aſhamed to ſay, Madam, that my pride was ſo great, that I preferred telling a falſehood to acknowledging the truth of our ſituation to this honeſt creature: I pretended that my huſband had got into work at Burlington farm, for which we had ſet out, and that being diſengaged, I alſo wiſhed for employment; enquiring if ſhe knew of any?

" She replied, that hands were wanted in the garden, where ſhe worked; but added, that it was not employment for me.

My neceſſities were too preſſing to heſitate; I replied that I ſhould gladly accept the employment, and begged ſhe would apply for me directly.

Ah! ſaid the good creature, little did I think—and her heart was ſo full, ſhe could ſay no more.

" I ſaid, I had never been accuſtomed to idleneſs, and cheerfully ſubmitted to the will of God.

I was

I was immediately ſet to work, and in the evening, with a heart ſomewhat lightened, I returned to my huſband, with the pittance I had earned. I continued for ſeveral days to attend regularly at the garden, but the anxiety I felt in leaving my huſband, who every day grew worſe, was ſuch, that it produced a ſlow fever, which reduced me ſo much, that it was with difficulty I purſued my labours. Still, however, I pleaſed myſelf, with the thought, that the extent of our miſery was unknown; till returning one evening, ſomething earlier than uſual, I met little Peggy at the entrance of our retreat. The poor girl fell upon her knees, and with tears in her eyes, begged I would not be angry with her. She ſaid, "ſhe had remarked how ill, and ſad, I looked, and was afraid things were worſe than I ſaid, which had made her determine to watch me home. But little did I think, ſaid ſhe, ſobbing, they were ſo bad.

"The grief of the poor child," ſaid Mrs. Brown, "affected me ſo much, that

I could not forbear mingling my tears with hers, and for ſome minutes, our hearts were ſo full, that neither of us could ſpeak: At laſt, ſhe broke abruptly from me, and taking the path toward home, I thought of ſeeing her no more that night; but I was miſtaken, about an hour and an half after, a ſoft rap came to the door; I opened it, and was not a little ſurprized to find there Peggy and her mother, each charged with a load they could ſcarcely ſtand under; would you believe it, Madam, they had brought us their mattreſs and blankets! and actually, till your bounty, made it unneceſſary, lay on the ground themſelves. I begged, and ſo did my poor huſband, that they would take them back, but it was all to no purpoſe; heaven be praiſed, they ſaid, they had found us out, and had a mattreſs and blankets for us. Nor was this all, I ſoon grew ſo ill, that I could not, as uſual, go to work, and then Madam, we muſt have ſtarved, had it not, been for theſe good creatures, who, I am certain, often went without

without neceſſaries themſelves, that they might ſupply us with what they fancied we could eat.

The good woman herſelf, was obliged to keep cloſe to work, but Peggy conſtantly ſlaved to us twice, and ſometimes three times a-day. She never came empty-handed; if it were but a few ſticks ſhe had picked up by the way, to make us a little fire, ſhe had always ſomething: and endeavoured to alleviate our diſtreſs by a thouſand kind attentions.

"Indeed, madam," ſaid Mrs. Brown, "had it not been for thoſe good people, we muſt have been loſt for want. I can never forget their kindneſs."

"This account," continued Mrs. Mills, "raiſed Dame Bartlet and Peggy high in my eſteem: I wiſhed to ſee them, and one day took a ride to the village where they lived. Upon enquiry, I found, as Mrs. Brown had before told me, that dame Bartlet was the widow of a poor weaver; that by dint of hard labour, ſhe

ſupported herſelf and child, and paid for a room, or rather cock-loft. I learnt further, that ſhe had not always been accuſtomed to labour without doors; but that two years before, ſhe had the misfortune to be robbed of her ſpinning-wheel, which before ſupported her, and ſince that time, ſhe was glad to weed, chare, or do any thing to earn an honeſt penny. The cottage, which we this morning viſited, happened at that time, to be vacant, and I thought it could not be occupied by more worthy inhabitants. I, therefore, aſked dame Bartlet, if ſhe would like to remove to it? ſhe was rejoiced at the propoſal, and when, I added, I would furniſh it, and purchaſe a ſpinning-wheel, Peggy and ſhe were nearly out of their wits with joy. I need not tell you, I was as good as my word; a fortnight after, they removed to the cottage, and have ſince occupied it. An opportunity, alſo, ſoon offered of placing Mrs. Brown in a ſtation, to which ſhe does great credit; we have

a ſchool

a ſchool of induſtry in the Village, the miſtreſs of which dying, Mrs. Brown ſupplies her place. Peggy attends the ſchool, and though Mrs. Brown is too juſt to let her partiality appear at improper times, I am certain, ſhe entertains the ſame affection for her, as if ſhe were her own child."

Mrs. Mills concluded her narrative, as the ſervant brought in tea. A walk upon the lawn occupied the time, till the bell rung for ſupper, after which, the whole family being aſſembled, the day was as uſual, concluded in prayer and thankſgiving.

The next morning, Clara roſe at a more early hour, and took care to be ready to receive her aunt in the breakfaſt parlour. Having taken their tea and chocolate, Mrs. Mills acquainted her young friends, that ſhe was going to viſit her bees, and invited them to accompany her. They all three, then took their way to the apiary, at which, they preſently arrived. Among the hives, was one different to

the

the reſt; Clara obſerved it, and enquired the reaſon?

"That hive, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "was conſtructed by my own directions; you ſee it is chiefly of glaſs: I ſpend many hours in obſerving the little buſy people that inhabit it."

"I have been told aunt," ſaid William, "that bees have a queen; is it true?"

"It is;" ſaid Mrs. Mills, "and what is more, this queen has a palace, guards to attend her, and ſubjects over whom ſhe reigns as abſolute.

You are jeſting with us, aunt?

"I am perfectly ſerious," replied Mrs. Mills: "In every ſwarm, there are three ſorts of bees; the working bee, the drone which is ſuppoſed to be the male, and the queen, which is longer and more beautiful than the reſt, and is the mother of the whole ſwarm."

But you ſaid the queen had a palace.

She has a cell proportionable to her ſize, raiſed from a large foundation, either on the flat or edge of the comb, and differently

differently formed from the reſt. This I think, may, with no great impropriety be called her palace. She generally keeps herſelf retired in the upper apartments of the comb, and whenever ſhe appears in public, which is generally to depoſit her eggs, is attended by ſeveral large bees, if not by the whole ſwarm, who flutter their wings, and appear all in tranſport.

" You were very right indeed aunt, ſaid William, " to ſay that the queen had her palace, and her guards; how wonderful!

" The attachment of the whole ſwarm to the queen bee," ſaid Mrs. Mills, " is, indeed, wonderful: an author, who has given us many curious particulars concerning theſe inſects, relates, that having once an inclination to prove, how far this ſurprizing inſtinct, would influence them, he took a ſwarm of bees that had been hived the day before, and having ſhook them in a lump, on a graſs plot, ſeparated the queen bee from the reſt, clipt one of her wings, and kept her in a box apart. A

general

general confuſion immediately took place, contrary to their uſual cuſtom, which is to cluſter together, the bees immediately ſcattered themſelves over the graſs, and flew here and there in purſuit of their queen with a pitious diſcontented noiſe. When the box, in which ſhe was confined, was opened, a different ſcene took place; they immediately gathered together from all parts, and in leſs than a quarter of an hour, the whole ſwarm cluſtered around it, waiting till the queen, as uſual, ſhould lead them to ſome place for their common preſervation.

But the poor queen, was unable to riſe; and her faithful ſubjects, choſe rather to die with her, than to deſert her, for tho' pinched with hunger, they would not fly to get any food. Nor was the affection of the queen leſs to her ſubjects: when ſeparated from them, ſhe refuſed the honey that was repeatedly offered her. I am ſure, you will be ſorry to hear, that having continued four days, without taſting any food, they all literally died by famine,

except

except the queen, who lived only a few hours after *.

"Ah!" ſaid William, how I ſhould have grieved; "it was a cruel experiment, but a convincing proof, that animals have reaſon.

"Hold, my dear William," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "be cautious of falling into ſo groſs an error. Though the order and ſeeming rationality, which is diſcerned in the animal creation, cannot fail of raiſing our ideas of that Being, whoſe wiſdom is diſplayed in the minuteſt of his works, let us not imagine he has beſtowed on them that ſuperior faculty man alone enjoys. The little buſy creatures of whom we ſpeak, however wonderful their labours and œconomy, act by ſtated laws which providence has implanted in their nature: inſenſible of good and evil, they are impelled only to the performance of that which is neceſſary to their own preſervation, or the wiſe purpoſes for which they are created."

* Wardour on Bees.

At this inſtant the attention of William was attracted by a bee returning to the hive, and he exclaimed, "look, aunt at that bee; it is ſo loaded, it can ſcarcely fly."

"It is indeed well laden," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "but will ſoon be eaſed of its burden; obſerve, William, it is now at the entrance of the hive, and is met by ſeveral bees, who are buſily employed in aſſiſting it to unload."

"Is that what they are about?

"Yes, ſaid Mrs Mills; "they will ſwallow the little pellets the other has collected, and in their ſtomachs they will acquire the conſiſtence of wax, which will afterward be caſt up and turned over to other bees, whoſe buſineſs it is to knead it, and ſpread it into different ſheets, laid one upon another."

"Well," ſaid Clara, "it is aſtoniſhing! but how do they collect the little pellets?"

"They collect the yellow duſt of flowers in the hairs of their body; then bruſh them-

themſelves and form the grains into pellets. The honey is collected by a ſort of trunk; a ſmall part of it goes to ſupport the bee, and the reſt is preſerved in a litle bag, with which nature has furniſhed her ſtomach, to be caſt up and depoſited, afterwards, in magazines for the ſupport of the community."

"But I cannot conceive, aunt," ſaid Clara, "of what ſervice the wax can be; do they eat it?"

"With the wax," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "they build their habitations, and ſeal up the honey in their cells; they alſo mix it with honey, to make bee-bread for the ſupport of their young."

"Well," ſaid Clara, "I was never more intereſted in my life in any ſtory, than in the account you have given us of theſe dear little creatures: If they have not reaſon, I am ſure they have a much larger ſhare of inſtinct than any other creature."

"They certainly have," ſaid William."

"A ſufficient portion of this principle,"

ſaid

ſaid Mrs. Mills, "is viſible in the meaneſt inſect to raiſe our admiration of the Supreme Being. It is certain none can exceed the bee, whoſe œconomy preſents us with a uſeful leſſon, and whoſe labours with a food wholeſome and delicious; but, were you to look into the hiſtory of the minuteſt inſects, you would be ſenſible that this wonderful property is not beſtowed partially; each is furniſhed with it in proportion to its wants. I could mention many—O, here is one at hand to my purpoſe. Let us ſtop a moment at this roſe buſh, and obſerve with what admirable dexterity the ſpider—

"A ſpider," exclaimed Clara, ſtarting on one ſide—"I am ſo frightened!"

"Do not alarm yourſelf, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "I am not going to put the poor thing upon you, and I am ſure it will ſooner run from you, than to you."

"O," ſaid Clara," "I am ſo terrified! I have ſuch an averſion to ſpiders!"

"On what account, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Mills? "Let us take the other path,

and

and talk this matter coolly over. Tell me from what does your averſion to theſe inoffenſive inſects ariſe?"

"O la! aunt, I can't tell; they are ſuch ugly creatures, the very thought of them makes me ſhudder."

"But, my dear child, if you have no better reaſon for diſliking them, you muſt allow me to ſay, it is a prejudice which a little reſolution would enable you to ſurmount."

"O aunt," replied Clara, "it is impoſſible I ſhould ever endure the ſight of a ſpider: I took a diſlike to them when I was a very little girl; and I am certain, if one was to be put upon me, I ſhould fall into fits."

"If you think ſo," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "it is your duty to ſurmount a prejudice, accident might render ſo fatal to you."

"O dear," ſaid Clara, "it would be in vain for me to try; when people have ſuch an antipathy to a thing, it is impoſſible to overcome it."

"If I convince you," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "that

" that it is poſſible to overcome ſuch an antipathy, will you promiſe me to uſe your endeavours to get the better of your diſlike to ſpiders?

" I have the greateſt opinion of what you ſay, Madam," ſaid Clara, " but I own, I do not think you will ever convince me it is poſſible to overcome a diſlike where it is ſo ſtrong as mine to ſpiders."

" But, if you *ſhould* be convinced, will you promiſe me to uſe your endeavours?"

" If you deſire it, Madam."

" Well then," ſaid Mrs. Mills, " I will recount an anecdote that muſt convince you an antipathy is really to be overcome."

" O," ſaid William, drawing cloſe to his aunt, " I am glad we are going to have a ſtory: I do ſo love ſtories!"

" This I am going to relate," ſaid Mrs. Mills, " has the merit of truth: You have, without doubt, heard of Peter the Great, Czar of Muſcovy."

" Yes," replied William; " he founded the city of Peterſburgh."

" He

"He did ſo," replied Mrs. Mills, "and enacted many uſeful laws, which juſtly acquired him the ſurname of Great. But to my ſtory: This great man, in his childhood, had ſo great an antipathy to water, that he could not endure to approach even within ſight of it."

"Well," ſaid Clara, "that was the moſt ſtrange antipathy I ever heard of: how ridiculous! to be afraid of water!"

"Pardon me, my dear girl," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "if I cannot ſee any thing more abſurd, in the Czar's antipathy to water, than in yours to a ſpider—but, however, you ſhall hear my ſtory. This antipathy, which muſt have been an inſuperable bar to all his warlike atchievements"——

"How ſo, aunt," interrupted William; "I do not comprehend what his diſlike to water had to do with his battles."

"I ſee, William," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "ſmiling, that you are no ſoldier; do you imagine he could make one campaign, without having occaſion to paſs a river, or at leaſt, to encamp on the banks of it, which,

which, was almoſt as dreadful to him?"

"To be ſure, he could not," ſaid William, "ſtriking his forehead, what a fool I was!

"Well," rejoined Mrs. Mills, "this infirmity, which would have given his enemies ſo evident an advantage over him, was happily overcome by the addreſs of one of his courtiers."

"One fine day, Prince Gallezin, his governor, and chief favourite, perſuaded him to ride into the country, upon a hunting party, without informing him, there was a brook near the place. After a little diverſion, the favourite cried, what, hot weather! O that there was a river at hand, that I might jump in and bathe! How ſaid the young Czar, would you kill yourſelf? Galliezin anſwered, I have frequently bathed with your father, and yet your majeſty ſees me alive. Nothing can be more wholeſome in ſultry weather. The Czar was ſurprized, and coldly replied, I have heard, that people are frequently

quently drowned. Ay, ſaid the favourite, but not in water ſcarcely ſo high as one's knees. If you pleaſe, ſir, I will ſend ſome body to look for a ſtream, that you may ſee it is poſſible to bathe without drowning. The brook was eaſily found; the Czar rode toward it trembling, and ſtopped his horſe at a diſtance. Galliezen ordered ſome men to croſs it backward and forward, on horſeback; upon which, the Czar ventured to ride neater. Galliezen ſeeing this, rode through himſelf, and ordered ſome of his people to croſs it. They did; the Czar admired at what he ſaw: but, at laſt, had the courage to ride his own horſe over: Pleaſed at what he had performed, he from that time, uſed himſelf to the water, till by degrees, he got rid of this troubleſome antipathy, which was occaſioned by a fright, in his infancy." "Well, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "is it, or is it not poſſible to overcome an averſion?"

"There is no arguing againſt facts ſo

convincing," ſaid Clara, "if this ſtory is true—

It is recorded in the life of Peter the Great, interrupted Mrs Mills, if it will afford you the leaſt ſatisfaction, I will ſhew it you when we return to the houſe, nearly in the words I have related it. Dear Madam, ſaid Clara, you cannot think I doubt what you ſay.

"Well then, ſaid Mrs. Mills, I may claim your promiſe."

"Yes," ſaid Clara, but I have ſuch a diſlike to a ſpider! I have always avoided them, and Jane, my mamma's maid, knowing how terrified I was, was always upon the look out, that I might not be alarmed.

"Theſe very precautions," my dear, "ſaid Mrs. Mills, have encreaſed your diſlike; by conſtantly avoiding the ſight of the object, which diſguſts you, your imagination has painted its deformity greater than the reality.

"La! ſiſter," ſaid William, "there is no harm in a ſpider: you may eaſily get the

the better of ſuch a fooliſh diſlike if you try; let me go and fetch one; you ſhall ſee me handle it; I am not afraid.

"Oh for heaven ſake," ſaid Clara, catching hold of him, and turning pale with terror, "ſtop."

"Hold William," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "be not in ſuch haſte."

"Well," ſaid William, "I have done. I only wanted to uſe my ſiſter to a ſpider; if once ſhe could be perſuaded to touch one, the buſineſs would be done.

"You muſt remember, William," replied Mrs. Mills, "that the courtier, who ſo happily cured the infirmity of Peter the Great, acted with ſome addreſs; had he, inſtead of inviting him to enjoy the coolneſs of the river, ſuddenly plunged him into it, 'tis probable he would have ſtrengthened, inſtead of ſurmounting his prejudice.

I remember a perſon who had fits to the day of her death, from a frog, to which ſhe had a particular diſlike, being in jeſt, put upon her neck. People who

commit this ſort of violence, on the feelings of others, I am ſorry to ſay, (I do not mean that it is your caſe William), are rather deſirous of diverting themſelves, than of benefiting their friends.

There is ſomething very inhuman in thus ſporting with the infirmities of others; but let us take the next path.

"But the ſpider, aunt," ſaid Clara, alarmed,—"we muſt paſs ſo cloſe—indeed, I cannot venture."

"Nay, now, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "do not yield to an idle conceit, which your better judgment muſt condemn; recollect, that you are not going to encounter a Hyæna, or a Rhinoceros, but to look upon an innoffenſive inſect, to whoſe exiſtence, it is in your power, in an inſtant to put an end, and whoſe ingenuity is deſerving your higheſt admiration."

"But may I be ſure, madam, that you will not ſuffer it to crawl upon me," ſaid Clara; "and that you, William, will not play me any trick? "I will engage for William," replied Mrs. Mills, "and ſurely,

ſurely, you may rely upon me, after what I have ſaid."

"Well then;" ſaid Clara, "but let me go on this ſide—now be ſure, William, you do not play me any trick."

"Not I," ſaid William; "but you muſt not be angry, if I cannot help laughing to ſee you ſo fooliſh." They now came in ſight of the buſh, where the poor ſpider, little conſcious of the terror it inſpired, had half formed its curious web. When Clara beheld it, with ſuch agility, run from ſide to ſide of the branch, upon which it was weaving its ſubtile ſnare, ſhe ſtarted back, and it was ſome time before ſhe could be prevailed upon to advance: however, encouraged by Mrs. Mills, and a little aſhamed by the raillery of her brother, ſhe approached ſo near, as to ſee diſtinctly the whole progreſs of its ingenious labours. At firſt, her heart beat—ſhe declared it made her ſhudder, —ſhe had never, in her life, looked ſo long upon a ſpider—by degrees, ſhe became more calm, and at length, proteſted,

it was not ſo ugly as ſhe imagined—really, the body was very handſomely ſpeckled, and as for the web, it was aſtoniſhing from whence the thread, with which it was woven, could come" "The ſpider" ſaid Mrs. Mills, "has, at the extremity of her body, five openings, through which ſhe diſtills at pleaſure, a clammy glew: this forms the thread, which lenghthens in proportion to her diſtance, from the place where ſhe firſt faſtens it. When ſhe cloſes theſe openings, the thread, no longer extends, and ſhe remains ſuſpended in the air. Obſerve, Clara, ſhe makes uſe of the thread, for her aſcent, graſping it in her paws, as we ſhould a rope with our hands and feet."

"Well, really," ſaid Clara, "it is very curious, I ſhould like to ſee in what manner the web is firſt begun; this is half finiſhed."

"It will be well worth your attention, at another opportunity," ſaid Mrs. Mills. "Is the web begun in the middle?" aſked Clara.

"That

"That cannot be practicable," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "you ſee it is ſuſpended between two branches, the ſpider, therefore, would have no reſting place."

"Very true, aunt," ſaid William, "I never thought about it before, but really, I cannot conceive, in what part of the web, the ſpider can poſſibly begin."

"It is a queſtion," replied Mrs. Mills, "that might have puzzled wiſer heads than yours William, had not experience and obſervation fully diſcovered it. When the garden ſpider, for there are many kinds of ſpiders, begins its web, it places itſelf upon the end of a branch, and there faſtens ſeveral threads, which it lengthens to two or more ells, leaving them to float in the air: theſe threads are wafted by the wind, from one ſide to another, and lodged either on a houſe, pole, or the oppoſite branch, where they are faſtened by their natural glew. The ſpider, then draws them to her, to try that they be well fixed, and they become a bridge for her to paſs and repaſs at plea-

ſure; ſhe then marches to the middle of this thread, and adds to it another, by the help of which ſhe deſcends, till ſhe meets with a ſolid body to reſt upon, or leaves it as the firſt floating in the air, to the direction of chance; in the ſame manner, other threads are drawn from the centre, and there again, as you ſee croſſed. But I will leave the reſt to your own obſervation, which will inform you more agreeably."

"Well," ſaid William, "it muſt be owned, the ſpider is a very ingenious creature; I ſhould have puzzled my head for a month, and not gueſſed how ſhe began her web."

"Nor I," ſaid Clara, "but pray, Madam, what is the uſe of the web, when it is made?"

"Why," ſaid William, burſting into a fit of laughter, "dont you know, that ſpiders ſpread their webs to catch flies?"

"If I had known," replied Clara, ſomewhat piqued, "I ſhould not have aſked the queſtion."

"There

"There is no diſgrace," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "in not knowing a thing, the diſgrace is in not wiſhing to be informed."

"I did not mean to offend my ſiſter," ſaid William, "only it was ſo droll, to hear her aſk, what ſpiders ſpread their webs for."

"You know William," ſaid Clara, "that my mamma always ordered the ſervants to take particular care, that I ſhould not be alarmed, with the ſight of a ſpider, ſo you need not be ſo very ſharp upon me."

"Well," ſaid William, "I beg your pardon, ſiſter, I will be more careful in future."

And, do ſpiders really feed on flies, Madam?

"Undoubtedly," ſaid Mrs. Mills.

"Well then," ſaid Clara, "if the ſpider is an ingenious creature, you muſt allow that ſhe is very cruel."

"Pray, my dear, what do you underſtand by the word *cruelty*?"

"Why," ſaid Clara, "I think it is cruel to put an innocent thing to death."

"By cruelty," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "I underſtand, that depraved inclination which cauſes us to inflict a pang wantonly; or unneceſſarily, to deprive any creature of life: now the ſpider ſeizes the prey which nature has made neceſſary to her exiſtence; ſhe cannot, therefore, any more be charged with cruelty, than other animals, man himſelf, not excepted, for whoſe uſe innumerable creatures are daily doomed to ſuffer. We may grieve for the ſufferings the poor fly within the graſp of its enemy, but 'tis unjuſt for our reſentment, to riſe againſt the ſpider, who acts only in conformity to the ſtated laws, providence has implanted in its nature.

However, if you accuſe the ſpider of cruelty, ſhe has one quality, which cannot fail of meeting your approbation; I mean her attention to her young, which is ſo great, that ſhe will incur every danger ſooner than forſake them. She carefully

fully wraps her eggs in a web of aſtoniſhing ſtrength, which ſhe faſtens to a wall, or a leaf, and watches with unremitted ſolitude: if danger is at hand, her firſt care is to pull down the ſacred depoſite and eſcape with it. There is one kind of ſpider, which has recourſe to a very ingenious expedient for the preſervation of her eggs. ſhe ſuſpends her bag of eggs in ſome little aperture, perhaps of a wall, by a thread, and before them in the ſame manner, a little packet of dried leaves, which, by conſtantly ſwinging about at the entrance, prevent the birds and waſps, who are upon the watch for the eggs, from diſcovering them."

Well, that is indeed an ingenious contrivance!

When the little ſpiders are hatched, the mother carries them upon her back, and diſcovers her tenderneſs by a thouſand ſollicitudes: but, come my dear, let us walk on, our ſpider has completed her web, and I think you are convinced it is poſſible to

look upon one, without fainting or falling into fits.

"Indeed, Madam," ſaid Clara, "I am; and feel ſo far reconciled to the ſight of what I once ſo much dreaded, that I think, in time, it might be poſſible for me to ſee a ſpider crawling on my hand, with as little concern as I have felt in hearing it named."

"You ſee, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "what a little reſolution and proper reflection will accompliſh; but to this habit, which, in theſe caſes, is often more powerful than reaſon itſelf, muſt be joined by frequently accuſtoming yourſelf to look at, and examine a ſpider, when you conſider its deformities, will grow familiar, and your diſguſt wear away."

"Well, aunt," ſaid Clara, "I am reſolved, as this is the caſe, to pay my reſpects every day, while I am here, to the ſpiders that inhabit your garden."

"It is the reſolation of a ſenſible girl," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "but what is William examining with ſuch attention?"

"Bleſs

"Bleſs me," ſaid Clara. "what a beautiful caterpillar! where did you find it, William?"

"I found it," replied William, "at the foot of this tree. Pray, Madam, continued he, turning to his aunt, is not this the caterpillar, that changes to the peacock butterfly?"

"It is," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "and is probably preparing for its change."

"It muſt be a very curious change," ſaid Clara: "it puts one in mind of the transformations, one reads of, in the tales of the fairies."

"I know of nothing recorded in the tales of the fairies," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "more wonderful than the operations of nature, but familiarity cauſes us too often to view the moſt intereſting objects with indifference."

"But pray, Madam," ſaid Clara, "is it not ſtrange, that one never ſees a caterpillar actually changing into a butterfly?"

"When we return to the garden," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "I dare ſay, William will gratify

gratify you with the ſight of a Chryſalis."

Pray what is that?

"Why, ſurely," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "my dear girl, you did not expect to ſee this change, wrought in an inſtant; the operations of nature, are all effected by regular and imperceptible gradations; the oak, did not on a ſudden acquire its ſtrength and ſtatelineſs, yet it was once an acorn in the bowels of the earth. Toward the cloſe of ſummer, theſe little creatures being ſatiated with the verdure nature has provided for their ſubſiſtence, ceaſe to eat, and employ themſelves in building a retreat, in which they quit the form of caterpillars, and give birth to the butterfly that is within them. Some bury themſelves in the earth, and there rend their ſkin, which, with the head, paws and intrails, ſhrink back, and leave only a ſubſtance of an oval form called the chryſalis. This contains the butterfly, which having completed its grouth, burſts its encloſure, and comes forth. Other caterpillars

terpillars involve their bodies in a texture of thread and glew, and thus rolling themſelves over in a bed of ſand, collect an incruſtation of the ſmall grains, in this manner, as an ingenious author * obſerves, building themſelves monuments of ſtone. Another kind, pulveriſe the bark of the willow, or ſome other plant, and with a mixture of their natural glew, form it into a paſte, in which they wrap themſelves: others again, ſpin themſelves like the ſilk-worm, a warm covering that ſecures them from the rain; In ſhort, nature has given to each, abilities in different ways, to ſecure itſelf a ſafe retreat, during the time of its inactivity.

"How wonderful," ſaid Clara! "but pray, Madam, do ſilk worms undergo any change?"

"The ſilk worm", ſaid Mrs. Mills, "changes to a moth, in the ſame manner as the catterpillar does into a butterfly:

* The Abbé La Pluche, to whoſe works the author is frequently indebted in the courſe of this publication.

there

there is a great reſemblance between the ſilk worm and thoſe caterpillars which ſpin themſelves a covering."

"Ah," ſaid William, "but ſilk worms are of ſome uſe; we are obliged to them for all the fine ſilks we admire; as for caterpillars, they are good for nothing."

"I am very ready," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "to acknowledge all our obligations to the ſilk worm; but ſhould be ſorry to ſuppoſe for a moment, that infinite Wiſdom has formed the moſt inſignificant creature in vain."

"Why, madam," ſaid William, "of what uſe can caterpillars be? I am ſure I have heard our gardener ſay that they injure the trees and plants very much."

"It muſt be owned," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "that our trees and plants ſometimes ſuffer from the viſits of theſe inſects; but then again it muſt be remembered, that the poor birds, as well thoſe which ſupply our table as thoſe which delight us with their ſong, would ſuffer ſtill more ſeverely from their abſence."

"How

"How ſo, aunt?"

"Caterpillars and worms," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "are the food of young birds: the parents do not forſake the eggs till the fields are repleniſhed with theſe inſects, which diſappear when the earth is covered with grain and other proviſion, and the young brood has acquired ſtrength to digeſt it. You muſt allow, that the caterpillar, who furniſhes ſupport for the young birds, has, in its turn, a title alſo to ſupport; and this it finds in the plants and verdure of the earth: its depredations, to our imperfect view, may ſometimes alarm, but that wiſe Being who formed, and knows to what uſe he has aſſigned the creature, knows when to permit and when to ſet bounds to its ravages."

Our party, mutually pleaſed with each other, had ſtrolled conſiderably further than they at firſt deſigned: They had for ſome time left Mrs. Mills's encloſures, and were proceeding down a ſhady lane that led to the village, when their ears were aſſailed by the noiſe of ſeveral hammers

mers which proceeded from a blackſmith's ſhop. Mrs. Mills in vain endeavoured to raiſe her voice, and the young folks to attend; the nearer they approached, the louder were the ſounds, which encreaſed, till ſilence was at laſt all that could be oppoſed to them.

Clara, who was extremely intereſted in her aunt's diſcourſe, was much diſconcerted at the interruption; and, as ſoon as ſhe could make herſelf underſtood, declared, with ſome impatience, that ſuch trades were quite a nuiſance, and ought not to be ſuffered.

"Come, come," ſaid William, "do not be too ſevere, ſiſter; the noiſe of a blackſmith's hammers is not ſo bad as the ſmell of a tanner's pits."

"I am ſure," ſaid Clara, "no ſmell can be ſo inſupportable as the horrid din of thoſe abominable hammers; I declare, we are not yet beyond the ſound of them, they have put every thing my aunt was telling us about the caterpillars out of my head."

"Well,

"Well," ſaid William, "both the tanner and blackſmith are bad enough, to be ſure; you would ſay ſo, Clara, if you were as conſtantly regaled with the ſmell of the ſtinking hides as we are at ſchool: There are tan-pits adjoining to our playground, at Mr. Markum's. It is a ſhame, people of conſequence ſhould encourage ſuch trades, and ſuffer them upon their eſtates."

"I am quite of your opinion, brother," replied Clara, "they are quite a nuiſance."

Mrs. Mills, perceiving they had nearly exhauſted their rage againſt the poor tanner and blackſmith, now broke the ſilence ſhe had for ſome time kept. "You think then," ſaid ſhe, "that every perſon of conſequence ſhould diſmiſs the honeſt blackſmith and tanner from their eſtate?"

"Indeed, aunt, we do," replied Clara; trades that are ſuch a nuiſance ſhould not be encouraged."

"I am afraid then," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "the ſaw and mallet of the carpenter, the chiſſel

chiſſel of the maſon, the grindſtone of the cutler, and the appendages of many uſeful trades, will give the profeſſors little chance of your favour, in ſhort, were I to judge by your impatience, at the ſmall inconvenience you have ſuſtained from the tanner and blackſmith, I ſhould predict that the mechanic arts, in general, would not find a warm friend in either."

"No, aunt," ſaid William, "we do not ſay that we would diſcard all; but ſome, you muſt allow, are leſs uſeful and more diſagreeable than others."

"All, my dear William, are uſeful in their turn; none more ſo than thoſe which you deſpiſe: Were examples wanting to prove what daily experience ſo clearly demonſtrates, I could relate a circumſtance, in which their utility was proved in a very critical ſituation."

"Dear aunt, do relate it," exclaimed the young folk.

"My dears, it is a narrative of ſome length, and we are already at home."

"Nay,

" Nay, now you have raiſed our curioſity."

" Well," ſaid Mrs. Mills, ever ready to oblige, " when we get home, I will look among my papers for an extract I made of the circumſtance; and, after dinner, read it."

At this moment the door opened, and they ſeparated to dreſs for dinner.

" Well," ſaid Clara to her brother, whom, on her return, ſhe found alone in the dining parlour, " Who could have thought that almoſt two whole days could have been ſpent ſo agreeably in this ſolitary place, without any other company than one's aunt!"

" Ah," ſaid William, " who could have thought it!"

" I declare I have not yet," ſaid Clara, " found one hour tedious: My aunt is a charming woman; my papa ſaid ſo, but I did not believe him. I already begin to love her dearly, ſhe is ſo kind and agreeable."

" Yes,"

" Yes," replied William, " ſhe has always ſomething new to tell us; but huſh——.

The entrance of Mrs. Mills, broke off the diſcourſe, and dinner ſoon after followed.

The young folk were not a little pleaſed, to ſee that their aunt had been mindful of her promiſe; the deſſert being removed, ſhe drew from her pocket, a written paper, and read to them, the following

Account of the ſufferings of the unfortunate perſons, who ſurvived the ſhipwreck of the Doddington Indiaman*. (Deſigned to illuſtrate the utility of the Mechanic arts.)

On the 23d of April 1755, the Doddington, a ſhip belonging to the Eaſt India Company, ſailed from the Downs, and on the 17th of July following, about one in the morning, ſtruck on a rock, diſtant,

* Abridged from Dodſley's Annual Register.

diſtant, eaſt from the Cape of Good Hope, about 250 leagues. Of 270 ſouls that were on board when the ſhip ſtruck, 23 only eſcaped to the ſhore, which was a barren uninhabited rock, apparently capable of affording them but a temporary ſuccour. Their firſt care, was to ſearch among the things, which the violence of the ſea had thrown upon the rocks, for ſomething to cover them, and in this, they ſucceeded beyond their hopes. They next felt the want of fire, which was not ſo eaſily ſupplied: Some attempted to kindle two pieces of wood, by rubbing them together; while others were ſearching among the rocks, in hopes of picking up ſomething to ſerve for a flint and ſteel. After a long ſearch, a box containing two gun flints, and a broken file, was found; this was a joyful acquiſition, but ſtill, till ſomething like tinder could be procured, the flints and ſteel were uſeleſs; a further ſearch was therefore undertaken, with inexpreſſible anxiety; and at laſt, a caſk of gun-powder was diſcovered,

covered; but this, to their great diſappointment, proved to be wet: a ſmall quantity, however, that had ſuffered no damage, upon a cloſe examination, was found at the bottom of the caſk. Some of this, they bruiſed on a linen rag, which ſerved very well for tinder, and a fire was ſoon made. The wounded gathered around it, and the reſt went in ſearch of other neceſſaries, without which, the rock could afford them but a ſhort reſpite from deſtruction. In the afternoon, (for the ſhip ſtruck about 3 in the morning) a box of wax candles, and a caſk of brandy, were brought in, and ſoon after, ſome others of the party returned with an account, that they had diſcovered a caſk almoſt full of freſh water, which was even more welcome than the brandy. The chief mate brought in ſome pieces of ſalt pork, and ſoon after others arrived, driving before them ſeven hogs, which had come on ſhore alive. The approach of night, made it neceſſary to provide ſome ſhelter; all hands were therefore employed, and a

tent

tent was at laſt made of ſome canvaſs, that had been thrown aſhore, though it was ſo ſmall, for want of more ſail cloth, that it would not hold them all. They were obliged to erect their tent upon the higheſt part of the iſland, from fear of being overflowed; and this was covered with the dung of a large kind of water fowl, called a gannet, by which the iſland was much frequented. As they had paſſed the day, therefore, without food, they paſſed the night without reſt, being ſunk a foot in the fowl's dung, and the fire conſtantly being extinguiſhed, by the tempeſtuouſneſs of the night.

"The next day the company were called together, to eat their firſt meal, and ſome raſhers of pork were broiled upon the coals for dinner. The ſitting thus diſconſolate and forlorn down to a repaſt they had been uſed to ſhare in convivial cheerfulneſs, ſtruck them with ſuch a ſenſe of their condition, that they burſt into paſſionate lamentations, wringing their hands, and looking round them with

all the wildneſs of diſpair: in ſuch a tumult of mind, the thoughts naturally hurry from one ſubject to another, to fix, if poſſible, upon ſomething that may afford comfort: one of the company recollected that the carpenter was among them, and ſuggeſted to the reſt, as a ſubject of hope, that, with his aſſiſtance, it might be poſſible to build a ſtrong ſloop, if tools and materials could be procured.

"Every one's attention was immediately turned upon the carpenter, who declared he had no doubt he ſhould be able to build a ſloop that would carry them to ſome port of ſafety, if tools and materials could be found.

"At that time they had no rational proſpect of procuring either; yet they had no ſooner placed their deliverance, one remove beyond total impoſſibility, than they ſeemed to think it neither improbable nor difficult; they began to eat without further repining, and from that moment the boat engroſſed their whole converſation. As ſoon as they had finiſhed

ed their repaſt, ſome went in ſearch of tools, which were, however, not that day to be found, and others to mend the tent. The next day they ſecured four butts of water, a caſk of flour, a hogſhead of brandy, and one of their little boats, which had been thrown up by the tide, in a ſhattered condition. Hitherto they had found no tools, excepting a ſcraper; but the day after, they had the good fortune to find a hamper, in which were files, ſail-needles, gimlets, and an azimuth compaſs-card. They alſo found two quadrants, a carpenter's adze, a chiſſel, three ſword blades, ſome timber, plank, canvaſs and cordage. Theſe they ſecured with great joy, though they were in want of many impliments, without which, it was impoſſible for the carpenter to work: he had juſt finiſhed a ſaw, but had neither hammer nor nails. In this dilemma, it happened that one of the ſeamen, a Swede by birth, picked up an old pair of bellows, and bringing them to his companions, told them he had been by

profeſſion a ſmith, and that, with theſe bellows, and a forge, which he hoped, by his direction, they would be able to build, he could furniſh the carpenter with all the tools he could want, nails included, as plenty of iron might be obtained, by burning the timber, which had come on ſhore from the wreck. This account was received with a tranſport of joy: the ſmith immediately applied himſelf to mending the bellows, and the three following days were ſpent in building a tent, and a forge; in bringing together the timber and plank for the uſe of the carpenter, who was in the mean time buſy in getting ready the few tools he had, that he might begin the boat as ſoon as poſſible; this, aſſiſted by the quarter-maſter, he did the next day; the ſmith alſo finiſhed his forge, laid in a quantity of fir for fewel, and from this day they both continued to work with indefatigable diligence, except when prevented by the weather. The ſmith having fortunately found the ring and nut of a bower anchor,

which

which ſerved him for an anvil, ſupplied chiſſels, axes, hammers, and nails as they were wanted; and the carpenter uſed them with great dexterity and diſpatch, till the 31ſt, when he fell ſick. As the lives of the whole company depended upon his recovery, we may judge with what anxiety they awaited it; and with what unſpeakable joy they beheld him, in a few days, ſo far reſtored, as to return to work.

"In the mean time the ſtores they had ſaved from the wreck were ſo nearly exhauſted, that they came to an allowance of two ounces of bread a man per day; and had no ſalt pork but what they determined to keep to victual the boat; for their eſcape ſcarcely depended leſs upon ſea ſtores than on the ſails themſelves: their water alſo fell ſhort. In this diſtreſs, they had recourſe to ſeveral expedients: they dug a well in hopes to find a ſpring, but were diſappointed: they attempted to knock down ſome of the gannets that ſettled upon the top of the rock, and in this they ſucceeded better; but found the

fleſh very rank, and perfectly black. They alſo made a raft, or float, called a catamaran, on which they purpoſed to go out a fiſhing, with ſuch hooks and lines as had come on ſhore; and on theſe they had ſome ſucceſs, till they were intimidated by an accident from the further uſe of them. Mr. Colet, the ſecond mate, and Mr. Yets, the midſhipman, had been out one afternoon, till four o'clock, when they endeavoured to make to land; but the wind ſuddenly blowing to the weſt, they found that inſtead of approaching the ſhore, they were driven very faſt out to ſea. The people on ſhore perceived their diſtreſs, and ſent out another float to their aſſiſtance; but the ſurf was ſo great that it overſet three times; and the men were obliged to ſwim back. In the mean-time they ſaw their friends driving out to ſea at a great rate; and were juſt giving them up to deſtruction, when the carpenter revived their hopes, by ſending them word that he would make the little boat (which the reader may recollect had been

thrown

thrown on ſhore in a ſhattered condition) ſo tight that it ſhould not take in water faſter than one man could heave it out: this he diſpatched in a quarter of an hour; and every one being willing to venture out for the deliverance of their friends, it ſoon overtook the float, received the mate and his companion on board, and returned ſafe to ſhore.

"It was now thought dangerous to venture out any more on the float: the carpenter, therefore, again went to work on the little boat, and put it into compleat repair. In this they frequently took great quantities of fiſh. Three of the company alſo having diſcovered a great ſmoke on the main land, embarked in it, in hopes of making ſome diſcovery favourable to their ſituation: but having been out forty-eight hours, loſt one of their companions by the overſetting of the boat, and incurred many dangers from the Indians, who came down upon them; they returned, giving thanks to God for having permitted them to return ſafe to a

place, which, however barren and deſolate, they now conſidered as an aſylum from a ſituation of greater diſtreſs.

"In the mean-while the whole company was thrown into the utmoſt conſternation and alarm, by an accident that happened to the carpenter, who cut his leg in ſuch a manner, that he was in great danger of bleeding to death. What anxiety, what alarm did not this occaſion! They had no ſurgeon among them, nor any thing proper to apply to the wound; yet, under God, their exiſtence depended upon the life of the carpenter. However, with much difficulty, the blood was at length ſtaunched, and the wound healed without any bad ſymptom. Soon after this they found a fowling-piece, which was a great treaſure; for though the barrel was much bent, by the aſſiſtance of their ſheet-anchor, the carpenter ſoon made it ſerviceable, and uſed it with great ſucceſs in ſhooting the birds, which they had before no way of taking but by knocking them down with a ſtick. About this

this time alſo they perceived the gannets, which had of late forſaken them, hover about the rock, on which they ſettled to lay their eggs, to the great joy of the company, who were for ſome time conſtantly ſupplied with them in great plenty. The carpenter and ſmith, in the mean while continued to work upon the boat, and the people were buſied in collecting what was, from time to time, thrown up from the wreck; eſpecially cordage and canvaſs, which was neceſſary to rig the boat, and ſome caſks of freſh water. They had alſo fortunately ſome rainy weather, which proved very acceptable, as they contrived to ſave ſome of the water for ſea-ſtores; their eſcape ſcarcely depending leſs upon freſh water than upon the ſails. But they were ſtill in want of bread, having lived many days on ſhort allowance. As a laſt recourſe, they thought of building an oven, as they had ſome barrels of flour, though they had no bread, and ſucceeding beyond their expectations, they converted the

flour into a tolerable biſcuit. This was, however, at length ſo nearly exhauſted, that they were forced to live upon a few ounces a-day, without brandy, of which there remained only a ſmall quantity; and this they preſerved inviolate for the uſe of the carpenter. Water was alſo ſo ſhort, that they were allowed only half a pint a day. In this condition, however, they providentially, in a great degree, preſerved their health and ſtrength; and, on the 16th of February, lauched their little bark, calling her The Happy Deliverance: On the 17th, they got their little pittance of ſtores on board, and on the 18th, ſet ſail from the rock, on which they had lived juſt ſeven months, giving it at parting the name of the Bird Iſland."

"And was their voyage favourable?" aſked William.

"They all," replied Mrs. Mills, "happily arrived, without accident, at the place of their deſtination".

"What a providential eſcape!" ſaid Clara;

Clara; "they owed it entirely to the carpenter and ſmith."

"Providence," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "undoubtedly made them the inſtruments of it; according to natural cauſes, they muſt have periſhed, had it not been for their aſſiſtance: I hope, therefore, ſince you ſee the utility of the mechanic arts, before you diſmiſs any one from your eſtate, you will firſt conſider whether the advantage yourſelf or ſociety derive from it be not equivalent to the inconvenience you ſuffer."

"I aſſure you, aunt," ſaid William, "I ſhall; and I ſhall be leſs ſevere on poor Charles Franklin than I uſed to be."

"I am ſorry," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "to underſtand that you have been ſevere againſt any one; but, pray, who is this Charles Franklin?"

"Why," replied William, "he is one of the boys at our ſchool; his father is worth a great deal of money, but he is an ironmonger; ſo, as Charles is the only tradeſman's ſon among us, all the boys

make game of him, and many will not keep him company; though, to ſay the truth, he is as genteel as any of us, and takes his learning as well."

"I am ſorry," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "to hear that your were capable of joining in ſuch illiberal conduct: I know of no other diſtinction between the gentleman and the common man than that of the heart, manners, and underſtanding."

"Why, aunt," ſaid William, "I own I have been ſometimes aſhamed, but at ſchool one muſt do as the others do; the great boys lead, and the little ones follow."

"I am ſorry to obſerve," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "that you have betrayed a very cowardly ſpirit, in being afraid of reſiſting what you know to be wrong, merely becauſe others were baſe, or weak enough to ſet you the example."

"But, aunt, if I had not joined in the laugh againſt Charles Franklin, I ſhould have been laughed at myſelf."

"My dear William, never ſuffer a falſe ſenſe of ſhame to deter you from doing

what

what you think to be right: This ſort of compliance may lead you into the moſt dangerous errors. To-morrow, after dinner, I will illuſtrate my obſervation, by a ſtory, which I think will afford you ſome entertainment."

"O," ſaid Clara," I am glad we ſhall have a ſtory; your ſtories, madam, are ſo intereſting!"

"I am happy, my dear, they give you pleaſure."

"But cannot we have it now, dear madam?"

"It is nearly tea-time," replied Mrs. Mills.

"Very true," ſaid William, "and we muſt not forget the microſcope."

"Nor muſt I forget," returned Mrs. Mills, ſmiling, "that I have not yet heard Clara touch the piano forte."

"But the miſcroſcope, dear madam," ſaid Clara, "I do ſo long to ſee it!"

"Nor am I leſs impatient," ſaid William, "to hear the ſtory."

"To-morrow," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "will be

be long enough for both; we muſt not be prodigal of our pleaſures."

William and his ſiſter were too ſenſible of their aunt's kindneſs to preſs her further; and the tea things being removed, Clara, unaſked, ſat down to the piano. Though not a proficient, ſhe played and ſung prettily; and, in the preſent inſtance, her readineſs to oblige entirely covered the defects of her performance. Her aunt was extremely pleaſed, and with regret obſerved, at nine o'clock, that it was time to ſeparate.

The next morning after breakfaſt, the young folks did not forget to remind their aunt of the microſcope.

Mrs. Mills expreſſed her readineſs to indulge their curioſity; but added, that, if ſhe might adviſe, a turn in the garden would be better, as the microſcope would furniſh entertainment when it was too ſultry to walk.

The young folk immediately aſſented, and they all three took their way to the garden.

"What

"What a beautiful ſhew of tulips!" ſaid Clara;" I think I never ſaw greater variety, nor more brilliant colours!"

"But what do you think of my auriculas!" ſaid Mrs. Mills, pointing to a beautiful aſſemblage on her left hand.

"O, they are charming!" exclaimed Clara.

"Do you think, aunt," rejoined William, "that any other country beſides England can ſhew ſuch a number of beautiful flowers; there is no end of their variety."

"It is certainly very great," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "but we muſt not forget that we are indebted to other climates for that beauty and variety?"

"How, aunt," "ſaid William; "are not theſe flowers the growth of our own country?"

"They undoubtedly grow here," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "and, as you ſee, thrive; but no plant can properly be called the natural produce of a country that will not grow without the pains of culture, which you know

know few of our vegetables or garden flowers will. For the auricula we are indebted to Caira; for the tulip to Cappadocia, a province of Perſia; the pink and carnation come from Italy; the lily from Syria; the tuberoſe from Java and Ceyland, iſlands in the Indian Ocean; and the delicate fragrant jeſſamine, which I am ſure we all admire, is a native of the Eaſt Indies. The ſun does not ſhine with ſufficient power and conſtancy in our climate, to produce ſuch brilliant colours and powerful odours."

"Well, aunt," ſaid William, "there is one thing, however, in which Old England I think may glory; and that is in her fields of corn; they are certainly her own."

"I ſee," ſaid Mrs. Mills, ſmiling, "that William is willing to ſtand up for the conſequence of his country; but, my dear fellow, rye and wheat grow wild in Tartary and Siberia, but require a deal of culture here; corn, therefore, cannot be the produce of England."

"Well,

"Well, aunt," ſaid William, "I am ſure neither Tartary nor Siberia can ſhew finer fields of corn than we paſſed through yeſterday."

"There I agree with you," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "the ſoil of England is extremely well adapted to the culture of corn, which it produces in ſuch abundance, as not only to ſupply its own inhabitants, but other countries, to which great quantities are yearly exported, as an article of commerce. Corn is nevertheleſs of foreign origin, as indeed are more of our vegetables and herbage. The colliflower comes from Cyprus, an iſland in the Levant; aſparagus from Aſia; ſharlots from Siberia; and horſe-radiſh from China. Lentils we owe to France, and kidney-beans to the Eaſt Indies; garlic alſo is produced naturally in that part of the world. When America was firſt diſcovered, which you know was in the year 1492 by Chriſtopher Columbus, a number of plants and flowers were found there, till then unknown to the reſt of Europe, to different parts of which

which they have ſince been tranſplanted. We are obliged to Brazil, a province of South America, for that excellent and uſeful vegetable the potatoe."

"Well," ſaid Clara, "I had no idea that all our vegetables and flowers came from foreign countries."

"The ſoil of each different country," reſumed Mrs. Mills, "contains juices proper for the nouriſhment of the vegetables peculiar to it, and theſe, if deprived of ſuch juices, will naturally wither and die."

"How is it then," interrupted William, "that we have pinks, roſes, and all theſe beautiful flowers and good vegetables, if they will not grow any where but in their own ſoil?"

"I did not tell you," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "that they would not grow any where but in their native ſoil, but that ſuch juices were requiſite to nouriſh them."

"Well," ſaid William, "that is pretty nearly the ſame."

"No;" replied Mrs. Mills, "it alters the caſe very much;"

"You

"You muſt remember, my dear boy, that it is poſſible for art to imitate nature; this is the province of the gardner, who by a mixture of the different ſorts of earth, clay, gravel, marl, chalk, &c. prepares a ſoil proper for the nouriſhment of the plant, or vegetable, he means to foſter, and regulates the heat according to that which nature has made neceſſary to it; and thus, as an ingenious author, who has, in part, furniſhed the information I have juſt given you, obſerves, by the induſtry of man, one country is made to contribute to the advantage of another."

"But how is it aunt," ſaid Clara, "that we ſee ſo many different ſorts of flowers grow out of the ſame bed? from what you have ſaid, I ſhould ſuppoſe, the juices that were fit for one kind, would not be ſo for another."

"Every plant," my dear Clara, "replied Mrs. Mills, "is capable of chooſing for itſelf; the wiſe author of nature has provided each with a ſet of veſſels or fibres, that eagerly attract and admit thoſe juices

juices that are proper for its nurture, and reject all other.

"These juices are set in motion by the air and heat, and circulate through the whole plant in the same manner as the blood does through our veins."

"Dear Madam," said Clara, "where can you possibly have learnt so many curious particulars?"

"From reading and observation, my dear, returned the lady, for which the country affords ample opportunity."

"I see, Madam," said Clara, "that it is possible to pass one's time very agreeably in retirement; when I came, I entertained different sentiments; I thought it impossible to be amused without cards, and public diversions, but though I have been here only two days, I already see things in a very different light."

"My dear child," said Mrs. Mills, "you make me very happy; be assured, nothing but habit, which will sometimes overcome nature, and eradicate the best principles, can induce us to fly for amuse-

ment,

ment, to ſuch low irrational pleaſures, while the glorious volume of nature is open to our peruſal: but the ſun grows powerful; and you are, I doubt not, impatient to ſee the wonders my microſcope will diſcover." Saying this, ſhe took the path toward the houſe, and having conducted the young folks into a room, which ſhe had previouſly prepared for their reception, ſhe produced the wing of a butterfly, and having rubbed off ſome of the duſt, deſired the young folk would view it through the magnifying glaſs. They eagerly obeyed; and with aſtoniſhment beheld that every grain of duſt was a diſtinct feather!

They then examined the wing itſelf, and perceived, that when the duſt was rubbed off, a thin ſkin only remained perforated, with little holes, the actual ſockets, which contained the quills. "Well," ſaid Clara, "this is indeed wonderful, I ſee the wing of a butterfly is as truly compoſed feathers as the wing of a bird."

"Equally ſo," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "but I have more wonders to ſhew you. William,

liam, go to the window, and bring hither a dead fly."

"Ay," ſaid Clara, "let us ſee what kind of figure it will make."

The fly was immediately put into the microſcope.

"Dear," ſaid Clara, looking attentively at it through the glaſs, "its wings are a fine net work, beautifully glazed!"

"But do you obſerve," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "upon its head, two little immoveable creſcents, ſhaped like a ſplit pea, and upon theſe a number of minute eyes? each is furniſhed with a ſet of fibres or optic nerves."

"But I do not ſee," ſaid William, who now put his eye to the glaſs, "the uſe of ſo many eyes."

"Other creatures," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "can at pleaſure, turn their eyes, to ſee when danger is at hand; but the fly's being fixed and immoveable, they are placed on a round ſurface, ſome low, others high, that ſhe may diſcover when danger threatens her from above, below, or on either ſide. Take notice, alſo, of her bending claws, which

which are defended by ſponges, probably to preſerve their points, which would otherwiſe ſoon be impaired."

"I ſee them clearly, aunt," ſaid William, "and is there not, beſide, ſomething like hair, at the endof her feet?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Mills, "ſhe makes uſe of it as a bruſh, to clean her wings, and eyes. I dare ſay, you have often ſeen her rub one paw againſt the others, draw them over her wings, and conclude by bruſhing her head."

"Yes," ſaid William, "but who could have thought ſhe was provided with a little bruſh, for the purpoſe."

"Providence," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "has provided the meaneſt creature with the means to render its exiſtence comfortable. The trunk of the fly, is a very curious inſtrument, compoſed of two parts, which fold one over the other, and are both ſheathed in her mouth, the end is ſharp like a knife, and enables her to cut, when ſhe eats; ſhe likewiſe uſes it as a pump for the drawing up of liquors."

Clara and her brother were extremely delighted with the wonders of the microſcope, and Mrs. Mills aſſured them, they would find them inexhauſtible. "A grain of ſand, a drop of water, the minuteſt leaf," ſaid ſhe, "will furniſh you with an ample field for ſpeculation, and lead you to adore that Being, whoſe wiſdom ſhines in the minuteſt of his works; the ſting of a gnat, the point of which is ſcarcely diſcernible, in the fineſt microſcope, is a caſe compoſed of long ſcales, one of which ſerves as a new caſe to the other three, which are ſheltered in a long grove, have the ſides ſharpened like fine ſwords, and are beſide barbed at the point."

"It is not ſurpriſing then," ſaid Clara, "that it ſhould give one ſo much pain; upon my word, by the deſcription, it appears a formidable weapon."

"I will go and ſeek a gnat," interrupted William, "I ſhould like to examine the ſting."

Mrs. Mills prevented the execution of this deſign, by obſerving, that it was almoſt

moſt time to put an end to their ſpeculations; beſide, ſhe added, this microſcope would not, I fear, magnify ſufficiently, to ſatisfy you of all the particulars I have deſcribed, which are, nevertheleſs, to be clearly diſcerned through a glaſs fitted to the purpoſe."

"Pray," ſaid Clara, "what is this ſo curiouſly pinned to a piece of paper?"

"It is the wing of an earwig."

"Of an earwig!" ſaid William, "why, earwigs have not wings."

"Indeed, they have," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "and, as you ſee, very fine ones too."

"But, aunt," ſaid William, "I have ſeen many earwigs, but I never obſerved that they had wings."

"Neither may you have obſerved that beetles have wings, yet it is no leſs certain that they have."

"How is it then," returned William, "that we do not ſee them?"

"Thoſe inſects," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "whoſe wings are of ſuch a delicate tex-

ture, that the leaſt friction would tear them, have, as in the above inſtances, two ſtrong ſcales, which they riſe and fall like a pair of wings, but which are no more than a caſe to the real ones. The wing of the earwig is curiouſly folded beneath a little ſcale, and with the aſſiſtance of a fine pin, may readily be diſcovered."

Clara and her brother, reluctantly withdrew from a ſpeculation that afforded them ſo much pleaſure; but a recollection of the ſtory, their aunt had promiſed to relate, prevented their ſoliciting a renewal of it that day; in the afternoon, therefore, Mrs. Mills read aloud

THE EXCURSION,

A

MORAL TALE.

"AT the cloſe of a delightful ſummer, Mr. Weldon, a worthy clergyman, went into Lincolnſhire to take poſſeſſion of a ſmall living, in the gift of Sir John Bentley; to whoſe notice his excellent character

racter ſoon recommended him. Mr. Weldon had a wife, four daughters, and a ſon; with the latter of whom Sir John was ſo pleaſed, that he propoſed, if it met his father's approbation, to educate him with his own ſon. The offer was too advantageous to be rejected, it was embraced with the warmeſt gratitude, and Charles, a few weeks after, having taken a tender farewell of his parents and ſiſters, ſet off with the ſon of his patron for a ſeminary ſome miles diſtant. Young Bentley was at this time nearly two years older than Charles, who had juſt entered his twelfth year; he was the ſole ſurviving hope of his family, and from his cradle had been ſpoiled by flattery and indulgence; unaccuſtomed to reſtraint, his paſſions had gathered ſtrength, and though he had naturally good ſenſe, and a heart humane and affectionate, he ſeldom liſtened to the ſuggeſtions of theſe, but ſacrificed every worthy principle to the whim that actuated him for the moment. He was, beſide, turbulent and

haughty, and a great ſhare of obſtinacy was viſible in his diſpoſition.

" Charles, on the other hand, had an excellent heart, and an underſtanding capable of the higheſt improvement; but he had one failing, that conſtantly counteracted the good effect theſe would naturally have produced on his conduct; this was an eaſineſs of temper, carried to ſuch exceſs, that his conduct ſeemed rather to depend on thoſe with whom he aſſociated, than on the approbation of his own heart, or the principles inſtilled into him by his father.

" He loved virtue, he deteſted vice, but he wanted reſolution to maintain the one and to reſiſt the other: He was continually entering into things that his heart diſapproved, merely becauſe he was unable to withſtand the laugh, or reſiſt the perſuaſions of his companions. This unfortunate pliability of temper, added to his ſprightly good-humour, rendered Charles a favourite of young Bentley, and they ſoon became inſeparable companions.

" At

"At the requeſt of young Bentley, it was agreed that Charles ſhould ſpend the vacation with him; at the cloſe of the year, therefore, the young folks ſet out together for Sir John's houſe in London.

"Edward, for that was young Bentley's name, was received with the greateſt joy and affection by his parents, who flattered themſelves, he was greatly improved; nor did they forget Charles, whoſe heart beat with gratitude and pleaſure at the kind reception he experienced from his patron and Lady Bentley. The holidays ſeemed to communicate equal joy both to him and his friend, and for a week nothing but pleaſure was thought on. Young Bentley had his little parties at home and abroad; and Charles, unaccuſtomed to the gaiety that ſurrounded him, thought all happineſs and enchantment. Ten days elapſed in this manner, when one morning, as he was entering a toy-ſhop to execute a commiſſion his friend Edward had given him, his eye glanced upon features which ſeemed familiar to him. Curioſity induced him to

turn off the ſtep, and follow the perſon who had thus tranſiently attracted his obſervation. It was a young woman, clean but meanly clothed, ſupported upon crutches; in her countenance diſeaſe and want were ſtrongly pictured. Charles overtook her in an inſtant, and, as, with difficulty ſhe dragged her weight along, wholly abſorbed in her own miſery, looked ſtedfaſtly upon her face. One while he thought himſelf miſtken; another that it was impoſſible for two faces ſo ſtrongly to reſemble each other; at length reſolved to ſatisfy his doubts: "Catherine!" ſaid he, in a tone of enquiry. The young woman looked up, and turning her hollow eyes upon Charles, in her turn, looked ſteadfaſtly on him, and exclaimed at laſt: "Gracious me! do I ſee Maſter Charles Weldon!"

"Ah, Catherine!" ſaid Charles, kindly taking her by the hand, "I little thought to have ſeen you reduced to this miſerable ſtate!"

"You

"You ſee, my good young maſter," ſaid the poor woman, "what ſickneſs and poverty can bring one to. Thank heaven I have little to reproach myſelf with. I am ſtill honeſt, and as long as I was able, was glad to work: but it has pleaſed God, for ſome wiſe end, to afflict me, and I ſubmit with patience."

"But where do you live, Catharine?" ſaid Charles. "Are you in place? Have you been long a cripple?"

"You know, maſter Charles," ſaid Catherine, "that I left my maſter's, and came up to town, thinking to better myſelf; but I have repented it ſince. I ſoon got into place, indeed, and was liked very well by my maſter and miſtreſs; but when I was ſeized with this rheumatiſm, and could no longer do their buſineſs, it was not to be expected they would keep me: So I took a lodging down the ſtreet, you ſee yonder, where, by degrees, I parted with all my cloaths to ſupport myſelf. My miſtreſs was, indeed, very kind, and gave me money at different

times, but, as I was not able to work, it was ſoon gone. I have not a great ſtomach, maſter Charles, but indeed I have many times known a want of the little I could have eaten."

"Poor ſoul!" ſaid Charles, his eyes filling with tears, "Why did you not let my father know of your diſtreſs? But is there no hope of your ever being reſtored to the uſe of your limbs?"

"None, ſir," returned Catherine, "unleſs I could go to Bath: the charitable doctors who give me advice, ſay, that is the only thing that can reſtore me: but it is not for ſuch a poor miſerable creature, as I am, to think of ſo long a journey. Where ſhould I find money to bear the expence!"

"How I wiſh," ſaid Charles, "that it were in my power to aſſiſt you! How much money, do you think, would take you to Bath?"

"Ah! ſir," ſaid Catherine, "I am ſo helpleſs I could not attempt ſo long a journey with leſs than a guinea and a half: for

for nobody you know, maſter Charles, in a ſtrange place, would take me in, without I could firſt pay down the money for a lodging."

"And do you think," ſaid Charles, "that a guinea and a half would do, Catherine?"

"Yes, ſir," replied Catherine, "I could make that do very well. You muſt know, maſter Charles, there is a poor widow who lodges upon the ſame floor that I do: ſhe has been very kind to me in my diſtreſs. God knows I muſt have ſtarved if it had not been for her. She is now going to live with her daughter, who keeps a ſhop at Bath. To be ſure I was very ſelfiſh; but indeed, maſter Charles, it almoſt broke my heart when I heard I was to loſe her. It then came into my head, that if I could but raiſe a little money to bear the expences of the journey, I might go with her, and ſtand a chance of recovering the uſe of my poor limbs; and in caſe I was not ſo happy, I conſidered that, let the worſt come to the

worſt, I was as likely to get a little needle-work there as here. This made me very anxious to go: and, at laſt I took heart, and determined to aſk my good miſtreſs once more to ſtand my friend: But what do you think, ſir, when I went to the houſe, I found the whole family in grief and confuſion: My poor miſtreſs, two days ago, ſuddenly dropt down dead. My laſt reſource, therefore, has failed, and I am ſenſible that it is my duty to ſubmit patiently to the will of my Creator."

"But your friend is not gone!" ſaid Charles, eagerly.

"She ſets out in the waggon to-morrow night," returned the poor woman, with a ſigh.

The expreſſive eyes of Charles ſparkled on this intelligence: "How happy am I," ſaid he, "that I met you, and that it is in my power to aſſiſt you! Set your heart at reſt, my good Catherine, you ſhall go with your friend—I have a guinea and a half—How rejoiced I am that I ſav-

I ſaved it!" Saying this, he put his hand to his pocket; but recollecting himſelf, "I have unluckily," he added, "changed my waiſtcoat this morning, and have not the money about me. I will ſtep home for it now; or, if it will make no difference, bring it to you in the courſe of a few hours."

"Oh! my dear young maſter," ſaid Catherine, "you are too good.—But your papa and mamma, will they give their conſent?"——

"My father and mother," interrupted Charles, "are not in town; if they were, I know they would aſſiſt you more than I can.—As to the money I ſpeak of, it is my own, and I may do as I like with it. I ſaved it to ſpend in preſents for my ſiſters, when I returned into the country; but I know they will be better pleaſed to hear you have it, than with any preſent I could take them."

"And will you, indeed, be ſo generous?" ſaid the poor woman, whoſe cheek was now flushed with hope, "will

you be ſo generous to a poor creature, who can make you no return?"

"Say no more, my good Catherine," ſaid Charles, "I am ſure the pleaſure I ſhall have in aſſiſting you, will be greater than that you can conceive from the trifle it is in my power to appropriate to your uſe. Tell me your direction, and depend upon ſeeing me in a few hours."

"Ah! ſir," ſaid Catherine, "God, who has ſent you to my relief, will not ſuffer your goodneſs to go unrewarded." Then having pointed out to him the houſe where ſhe lived, ſhe added, a thouſand bleſſings go with you; and Charles having bid her farewell, was returning to the toy-ſhop, when ſtepping back a few paces, "you appear to walk in great pain, Catherine," ſaid he, "let me guide you over this croſſway; reſt upon my arm—there, do not hurry yourſelf."

"Oh! how good you are, maſter Charles," ſaid Catherine,—"there are few young gentlemen like you."

"Nay," ſaid Charles, "there is ſurely

ſurely nothing ſingular in being commonly humane, and wiſhing to take care of one who has ſo often guided and taken care of me."—Then having conducted her to the end of the ſtreet where ſhe lived, he added, " good bye, Catherine, depend upon ſeeing me before night."

Charles now, in reality, repaired to the toy-ſhop, where having executed his friend's commiſſion, he returned home.

" Charles, my boy," ſaid Edward, upon his entrance, " I have juſt hit on an excellent ſcheme!"

" Have you," replied Charles, who was always happy when his friend was pleaſed: " what is it?"

" Why," ſaid Edward, " you know my father and mother went out early this morning: they are ſent for to a friend who is ſick, ten or fifteen miles off; ſo we may be ſure they will not return till late in the evening."

" And what then?"

" It

"It has juſt come into my head, Charles, that we may have a nice canter."

"A canter?"

"Yes," returned the young gentleman, "Lightfoot, my papa's hunter, is in the ſtable: I can ride him, and you can have the little black poney. Nothing could have happened more lucky; there is a review at Blackheath; it will be a nice ride: and"——

"But have you aſked leave, Edward?" interrupted Charles.

"That would have been to no purpoſe," returned the young gentleman; "you know my mother would have been frightened out of her wits at the thought of my mounting Lightfoot."

"Then how can you think of ſuch a thing," ſaid Charles; "beſides, I now recollect hearing Sir John and my lady both deſire you would ſtay at home to be ready for Mr. Maſon, the miniature painter, who, you know, is this afternoon to take your picture. I am ſure they would be

be extremely diſpleaſed were you to be out of the way."

"There now," ſaid Edward, "I knew you would raiſe ſome objection: I never ſet on foot any thing that you do not oppoſe."

"You do me great injuſtice, Edward," returned Charles; "you know I am never ſo happy as when I can oblige you; but I love you too well, not to tell you when I ſee you do wrong; and, indeed Edward, you are much to blame to think of going out after the ſtrict charge Sir John and my lady gave you to the contrary; and to take Lightfoot will make it ten times worſe. You ſay your mother would be frightened out of her wits were ſhe to know you mounted him—What do you think ſhe will ſay, when ſhe hears of your diſobedience?"

"She will know nothing of the matter," ſaid Edward; "we ſhall be home long enough before ſhe, or my father, or even the painter comes, and I warrant I will ſtop George's mouth: he will go with

with us, and will not blab for his own ſake."

"You have very indulgent parents, Edward," ſaid Charles; "and there is ſomething very mean in betraying their confidence; and then to draw the ſervant in"——

"I think," returned Edward, ſomewhat piqued at his friend's freedom, "that I know my duty as well as yourſelf. Was it any thing of conſequence, I ſhould be as ſcrupulous, for I think I love my father as well as you do your's."

"I do not diſpute that," ſaid Charles; "nor mean, my dear Edward, to offend you; but merely to prevail upon you to give up this fooliſh ſcheme. There will probably be another review before the holidays are over, and then, I dare ſay, your father will not have any objection to take you to it; but were you now to go, your pleaſure would be interrupted by the recollection that you are doing wrong, and the fear of being found out. You may meet ſomebody you know; or twen-

ty

ty things that you do not think of may happen to diſcover it to Sir John."

"What a coward you are, Charles," returned Edward; "you have no ſpirit, you are ſuch a chicken-hearted fellow"—

"I have ſpirit enough, Edward, when I know my cauſe is good"—

"Well," interrupted the young gentleman, "I am ſure this is not a bad cauſe: as I told you before, if it was a matter of conſequence, I ſhould be more ſcrupulous; but what harm can there be in taking Lightfoot for a few hours? You know I have rode Mr. Shepherd's black Cæſar before now, and I am ſure he had ſpirit enough."

"You are deceiving your parents, Edward," returned Charles, "and you muſt allow there is harm in that; but it does not ſignify arguing, if you are bent upon going, I cannot prevent you; but I aſſure you I ſhall, on no account whatever, think of going with you."

"Nay, now, my dear Charles," ſaid Edward, "I do not often aſk a favour of you

you—Do oblige me this once—I will never again, I promiſe, deſire you to do a thing without my father's knowledge."

"This is always the way," returned Charles; "you know it hurts me to refuſe any requeſt you make, and you take advantage of my weakneſs. You have drawn me into many things againſt my inclination, but I am determined not to be prevailed upon in this: it is ſuch a wicked thing to deceive your parents, and to draw the ſervants in to tell lies—I am ſurpriſed you can think of it."

"There will be no occaſion," returned Edward," to tell any lies; we ſhall be back long enough before either my father or mother returns. Now, Charles, I have done many things to oblige you; do not deny me ſuch a trifle: There will be no other review before we go to ſchool, and I have ſet my heart upon ſeeing one."

"Say no more, my dear Edward, you know it diſtreſſes me to diſoblige you; but indeed I cannot countenance you in

ſuch

ſuch a bad action: Do, let me entreat you, think no more of this wicked ſcheme."

"Look you, Charles," ſaid Edward, "all you can ſay will be to no purpoſe: I am determined to ſee the review, whether you go or not; ſo it will make no difference in that reſpect, only I ſhall in future know how far I ought to rely on your friendſhip: As long as you can keep your own neck out of the nooſe, you do not care what becomes of me."

This laſt obſervation piqued the pride, and wounded the friendſhip of our hero, who began to utter his refuſals with leſs confidence. Edward perceived it, and continued to ſolicit, till Charles, notwithſtanding all he had ſaid, was weak enough to be overcome, and actually conſented to accompany him.

George, the ſtable-boy, was prevailed upon, with a bribe of half a crown, to attend them, and to keep the ſecret, and our two young gentlemen, the one on Lightfoot, and the other on the black poney, ſet forward on their imprudent expedition.

pedition. Edward, who, no more than his friend, had been much accuſtomed to ride on horſeback, though extremely elated with his ſtation, found ſome difficulty in keeping it; Lightfoot being a very mettleſome horſe, and not much accuſtomed to the tight-rein; however, by the directions of George, he managed to keep his ſeat, and arrived in high ſpirits at Blackheath. But here a diſappointment awaited them; the review they underſtood was deferred, owing to the indiſpoſition of ſome of the Royal Family, who were to be preſent. Edward was much diſconcerted; as alſo was his companion, who, notwithſtanding the uneaſy ſenſations he felt from acting ſo contrary to his principles, would not have been diſpleaſed, as he had gone thus far, to behold an exhibition entirely new to him; but they were fain to ſubmit.

"Well," ſaid Edward, having commented on their ill-luck, "we will not come thus far for nothing: George, do you think you cannot find a houſe where we may have ſome refreſhment?"

"Yes,

"Yes, Sir," replied George; "there is one juſt acroſs the Heath, beyond that clump of trees, where any thing may be had, if you have money."

"Yes, yes," ſaid Edward, "I will find money." Saying this, he gave Lightfoot a touch with the whip, and away they all went. "Well," ſaid Edward, recovering his ſpirits, which the diſappointment had ſomewhat damped, "this is delightful! I am glad we came; it is worth ſomething to ride Lightfoot. Charles could not forbear thinking the pleaſure was purchaſed very dearly, and was going to reply, when Edward exclaimed, upon ſeeing two youths advance, "I do think here is Maſter Jones, the ſon of one of my father's tenants! How do you do, my dear William," ſaid he, finding he was not miſtaken, "what can have brought you here?"

Maſter Jones enquired reſpectfully after Sir John and Lady Bentley, and replied, that he was at ſchool at Lewiſham.

"But

"But it is holiday time," ſaid Edward.

"My father," returned Maſter Jones, "lives ſo far off, that I have holidays only once a year."

"Well," ſaid Edward, "I am delighted to have met you. We came to ſee the review, but finding it is put off, are going to take ſome refreſhment. You and this young gentleman ſhall go with us—I inſiſt upon it."

"We are much obliged to you, Maſter Bentley," returned the young gentleman, "but we cannot ſtay without our Maſter's knowledge; we came out merely for a walk."

"My ſervant," ſaid Edward, "ſhall go, and ſay where you are; and then, I dare ſay, he will not be angry."

The young gentleman readily, upon theſe conditions, conſented, and George was diſpatched to Lewiſham, while our party, highly pleaſed with their rencounter proceeded acroſs the heath. Edward, who now felt himſelf of great conſequence, alighted at the inn, and giving his horſe

to

to the care of the hoſtler, entered with an air of importance, ordered a fire to be lighted in the beſt room, and ſomething to be dreſſed as expeditiouſly as poſſible for dinner. Theſe orders were preſently executed, and the young gentlemen, mutually pleaſed with each other, ſet down to a couple of fine fowls and cuſtards. The cloth being removed, Charles took an opportunity of reminding his friend, that it would be prudent to think of returning; but Edward declared, he was determined to make out the day, for he knew his father and mother would not return till late in the evening, and as to the painter he might go to the devil.

Charles was going to expoſtulate, but Edward, turning to his new companions, "What ſay you, my boys," ſaid he, "to a game at cards?"

All, but Charles, ſeemed highly to approve the motion; but he, ſenſible of the imprudence, once more drew his friend aſide to expoſtulate: Indeed, Edward, ſaid he, you had better not ſet down

down to cards, you know, how time paſſes, we had better go home: For my part, I have had no peace ſince I have been out, and I am ſure, I ſhall have none till I get home.

"You are a cowardly fellow," ſaid Edward, "I tell you, there is plenty of time, we ſhall be home long enough before my father and mother."

Saying this, he broke from Charles, and calling for cards, began to ſettle the preliminaries of the game.

"For my part," ſaid Charles, "I would prefer to ſet by, and look on; you know, Edward, I am not very partial to cards, and you are going to play higher than I can afford."

"What a ſtingy fellow you are, Charles," ſaid Edward, "to be afraid of loſing your money."

"I am not ſtingy," returned Charles, "but I ſhould be ſorry to looſe more money than I could pay."

"O, never fear," replied Edward, "I will help you out; but I know you will win."

"I neither

"I neither wiſh to win nor loſe," ſaid Charles; ", but, unable to withſtand the half ſmile of ridicule, which he obſerved on the faces of his companions, he ſat down with the reſt, though it was to ſtake part of the money he had appropriated to the neceſſities of poor Catherine. At firſt he won, but, as is generally the caſe, his fortune, at length, took a turn, and he not only loſt all he had gained, but a conſiderable part of the money he had promiſed to poor Catherine: this thought made him deſperate; in proportion as he loſt, his eagerneſs to continue the game increaſed: his life or death ſeemed attached to every card: he no longer watched the ſun, nor perceived that it declined faſt towards the weſt: regardleſs of the conſequences, he thought only of prolonging the game, in hope of recovering the money he had loſt, and which he conſidered the property of another."

Maſter Jones and his friend, however, ſeeing the evening come on apace, at length, took their leave; declaring they

dared not ſtay any longer, and Edward himſelf thought it neceſſary to call for the bill: contrary to his expectation, it amounted to more than his pocket would diſcharge. In this dilemma, he applied to his friend Charles, who, with a pang not to be expreſſed, but certainly not more ſevere than his imprudence deſerved, diſburſed the laſt remaining ſeven ſhillings of the guinea and a half he had ſo faithfully promiſed, before night, to carry to poor Catherine! As for Edward, as long he had it, it ſignified nothing to him where it came from, he paid the reckoning, and mounting his horſe, thought only of getting home as faſt as poſſible. Charles, alſo, once more aſcended the black poney, and, with a heavy heart, followed his friend. Though inexcuſably imprudent, he had not an unfeeling heart; the thought, therefore, of diſappointing the poor creature, to whom he had given hopes, and who looked up to him as her only reſource, filled his mind with unſpeakable anguiſh, and he continued his way, abſorbed in the moſt gloomy reflections,

reflections, till rouſed by his companion, who ſuddenly checked his horſe, and exclaimed, "O heaven, Charles! what will become of me? I have loſt my father's diamond ring!"

This was like a thunder-bolt to Charles; he was willing to hope, he had not heard right; till his friend added, "fly George, fly, ſee if it be not left at the inn."

George needed not this command to be repeated, he ſpurred his horſe, and was out of ſight in an inſtant.

"Feel in your waiſtcoat pocket," ſaid Charles, "perhaps it may luckily have fallen from your finger there."

"No," returned Edward, "it is certainly loſt, unleſs you have picked it up,"

"I!" ſaid Charles, "I never ſaw it but upon your hand at dinner, and I thought more than once to aſk, whether Sir John, or my lady, had given it you."

"No," ſaid Edward, "I ſaw it juſt before we ſet out lie upon my mother's dreſſing table, and it unluckily came into my head that I would put it on."

"How could you be ſo imprudent!" ſaid Charles.

"Indeed," returned Edward, "I cannot tell what poſſeſſed me, nothing could ever be ſo unlucky, I never in my life before thought of ſuch a thing—Dear, what a time George ſtays! one might have been twice there and back before now—let us go and meet him—O here he is."

By this time George was come up, and his ſorrowful countenance bore ſufficient teſtimony to the ill ſucceſs of his embaſſy: the ring was not to be found.

The reader may eaſily form an idea of the diſtreſs of the whole party upon this confirmation of their misfortune: Edward who, on every occaſion, was accuſtomed to follow the bent of his paſſions, was quite frantic, and declared that he dared not ſee his father without the ring, which he knew he particularly valued, on account of its once belonging to his grand-mother. Charles's feelings were not leſs acute, though, unwilling to add to the diſtreſs of his friend,

friend, he confined them within his own breaſt: George, too, was not the leaſt affected upon this occaſion; ſenſible that the blame would fall heavy upon him for taking the horſes out without Sir John's orders, he was equally alarmed at an event that threatened a diſcovery, and ventured to reprove his young maſter: "La! ſir," ſaid he, "how could you think of taking my maſter's ring! what ſhall we do—I am ſure I ſhall loſe my place; and that will be very hard for my good-nature—if it had not been for the ring,"——

"Well," interrupted the young gentleman, impatiently, "talking is of no uſe now; the ring is loſt, and there is an end of it."

A ſilence of ſome minutes now enſued, and our travellers, with a ſlow pace, proceeded homeward; each reflecting with bitterneſs on the ſhare he had in the adventure. As for Charles, this unexpected misfortune had entirely baniſhed all thoughts of poor Catherine, and the reſentment of his patron was the only object that now preſented itſelf to his mind.

Edward, in the mean while, who had been revolving all the circumſtances in his mind, at length broke ſilence: "I tell you what, Charles," ſaid he, "the beſt way to get out of the ſcrape, will be to deny that we know any thing of the ring."

"To deny it!" ſaid Charles, with aſtoniſhment; "to deny it! can you think of ſuch a thing?"

"Why," returned Edward, "I am ſure, if my father knows the ring is loſt, I ſhall never hear the laſt of it."

"But what can be ſo bad," ſaid Charles, "as the ſtanding in ſuch a falſehood? you ſaid, when you prevailed on me to come with you on this imprudent excurſion, that, were it a matter of conſequence, you would be more ſcrupulous in deceiving your father"—

"Well, well," interrupted Edward, impatiently, "to be ſure I did ſo; but I did not then think I ſhould ever have been in ſuch a ſcrape; deſperate diſeaſes require deſperate remedies—and my father's knowing

knowing who loſt the ring, will not bring it back."

"Very true, maſter Edward," ſaid George, "and if he knows about the ring, all muſt come out, and I ſhall loſe my place, which will be very hard for my good-nature; for you know, Maſter Edward, I did it all purely to oblige you."

"You are very wrong George," ſaid Charles, "to encourage Maſter Edward, in any thing ſo wicked; we have certainly all done wrong, but let us not attempt to excuſe one fault by committing a greater: The only thing we can do now, is to confeſs all, and ſubmit to what puniſhment Sir John thinks fit to inflict. I aſſure you, Edward, I will not aſſent to ſuch a falſehood."

"Well," returned Edward, "if it will give you pleaſure to make a breach between my father and I—if—"

"I am certain," interrupted Charles, "that you have a father too indulgent to be in any fear of that ſort; though he

will, no doubt, be diſpleaſed, he will not be irreconcilable."

"I know my father," returned the young gentleman, "better than you do; he is very indulgent, when I do nothing to diſpleaſe him, but if I do, he is very paſſionate, and I know will puniſh me with the greateſt ſeverity; but I ſee it will give you pleaſure to make me miſerable."

"Nay," ſaid Charles, "you know I incur the ſame danger as you: the reſentment of Sir John will fall equally upon me; but I aſſure you, I would rather ſuffer every thing than tell ſuch an unpardonable falſehood."

"As you are ſo very conſcientious, Charles," ſaid Edward, "there is one way that you may oblige me, and yet avoid telling a lie: you know the ring was never off my finger, ſo you may ſafely ſay, when my father aſks you, that you never *touched* it, that will not be a lie."

"My dear Edward," ſaid Charles, "an equivocation is the very firſt ſpecies of lying; becauſe, as my father has often told

told me, it is covering falſehood with the moſt plauſible reſemblance of truth: however, we may flatter ourſelves, he uſed to ſay, that we do not incur the diſpleaſure of God by this ſort of play upon words; the lie is already formed in our heart, upon which he looketh, and equivocation is only a more ſpecious method of impoſing it upon others. It is true, according to the literal ſenſe of the word, I might ſafely tell Sir John, I did not *touch* the ring; but if by this, I mean to convey that I know nothing of it, I am equally a liar, as if the ſame idea were conveyed in different words."

"Well," ſaid Edward, impatiently, "it is not a time to preach now: I ſee you are determined not to oblige me—but I know the reaſon: you ſaid no longer ago than yeſterday, that you had forgot all paſt differences, but I ſee now that you are glad to retaliate, and would rather get into a ſcrape yourſelf, than not be revenged."

This was a turn Charles little expected; he indeed repeatedly ſuffered from the turbulent and arbitrary temper of Edward; but ſuch was the affection he entertained for him, that a kind look, a word of conceſſion, was ever ſufficient to efface from his mind every trace of reſentment or diſpleaſure; he was, therefore, inexpreſſibly hurt that his friend ſhould ſuſpect that he was actuated by ſo mean a motive, and endeavoured to convince him that he acted from a diſintereſted regard to truth, which he had been taught to venerate as the baſis of every virtue. Edward, who was not without art, perceiving his ſuſpicions touched him to the quick, pretended to be but the more confirmed in them, thinking it would be the moſt effectual means to attain his ends.

"Yes, yes," ſaid he, "I ſee you are glad to retaliate; I relied too much on your profeſſions: It is true, I may not be able to boaſt of a temper, at all times, ſo equal as yours; but Charles could not ſeriouſly have

have aſked a favour, that I could have refuſed: my temper may be warm, perhaps violent, but I am equally warm in my attachments, I cannot be a cool friend."

"I am not a cool friend," replied Charles, with tears in his eyes, "I am ſure, Edward, you never found me ſo: try my friendſhip in any thing that will render you a real ſervice, and you ſhall ſee with what readineſs I will prove it, at all hazards."

"O!" ſaid Edward, with a ſneer, "it is eaſy to be bold when danger is afar off: I aſk the proof now, and from henceforth ſhall know the value I ought to ſet on your friendſhip."

"What would you have me do?" ſaid Charles, who was weak enough to be moved by his friend's pretended ſuſpicions; "'tis true, it is not the firſt time, I have been ſo weak as to be prevailed upon by your entreaties, to enter into things that I knew were wrong; but this is of ſuch ſerious conſequence, indeed, I cannot; beſide,

when we have told this falſehood, do you ſuppoſe your father will believe we know nothing of the ring?"

"O!" ſaid Edward, "'tis a hundred to one if he miſſes it; he does not wear it once in ſeven years: he will think it has been ſwept away, or that he has loſt it off his finger; for I heard him ſay, the laſt time he wore it, it was ſo large he could ſcarcely keep it on; but, however, if your friendſhip will not ſuffer you to make ſo ſmall a ſacrifice—I can only ſay, it cannot be very ſtrong, and that I ſhall, in future, know how to value it."

Charles really entertained the ſincereſt friendſhip for the ſon of his patron; this was piqued by the pretended ſuſpicions of the artful boy; who, obſerving that he began to utter his refuſals with a leſs reſolute tone of voice, took advantage of his weakneſs, and by dints of entreaties and tears, though he did not convince his reaſon, worked ſo far upon his affection, that, in the end, his integrity gave way, and I am aſhamed to ſay, he conſented to

connive

connive at the falſehood his friend had projected.

The reader will judge, that the uneaſineſs of the whole party encreaſed the nearer they drew toward home; the day had for ſome time cloſed, and they were alarmed, leſt Sir John and his lady were returned: However, their fears on this head, were ſoon diſſipated, neither of them were at home, and Edward learnt, with great ſatisfaction, that the portrait painter had ſent to put off his attendance till the next day: he exulted extremely upon the occaſion, and ſo far recovered his ſpirits, as to banter Charles a great deal upon his cowardice. "I told you," ſaid he, "we ſhould come off ſafe; I dare ſay, my father will not be at home this hour." He was however deceived in his calculation; for Sir John and Lady Bentley arrived within a quarter of an hour: Charles, who was but young in the art of deceiving, ſickened at the thought of meeting Sir John; he, therefore, took the firſt opportunity of ſneaking to his chamber, where, with

grief

when we have told this falſehood, do you ſuppoſe your father will believe we know nothing of the ring?"

"O!" ſaid Edward, "'tis a hundred to one if he miſſes it; he does not wear it once in ſeven years: he will think it has been ſwept away, or that he has loſt it off his finger; for I heard him ſay, the laſt time he wore it, it was ſo large he could ſcarcely keep it on; but, however, if your friendſhip will not ſuffer you to make ſo ſmall a ſacrifice—I can only ſay, it cannot be very ſtrong, and that I ſhall, in future, know how to value it."

Charles really entertained the ſincereſt friendſhip for the ſon of his patron; this was piqued by the pretended ſuſpicions of the artful boy; who, obſerving that he began to utter his refuſals with a leſs reſolute tone of voice, took advantage of his weakneſs, and by dints of entreaties and tears, though he did not convince his reaſon, worked ſo far upon his affection, that, in the end, his integrity gave way, and I am aſhamed to ſay, he conſented to

connive

connive at the falſehood his friend had projected.

The reader will judge, that the uneaſineſs of the whole party encreaſed the nearer they drew toward home; the day had for ſome time cloſed, and they were alarmed, leſt Sir John and his lady were returned: However, their fears on this head, were ſoon diſſipated, neither of them were at home, and Edward learnt, with great ſatisfaction, that the portrait painter had ſent to put off his attendance till the next day: he exulted extremely upon the occaſion, and ſo far recovered his ſpirits, as to banter Charles a great deal upon his cowardice. "I told you," ſaid he, "we ſhould come off ſafe; I dare ſay, my father will not be at home this hour." He was however deceived in his calculation; for Sir John and Lady Bentley arrived within a quarter of an hour: Charles, who was but young in the art of deceiving, ſickened at the thought of meeting Sir John; he, therefore, took the firſt opportunity of ſneaking to his chamber, where, with

grief

grief and vexation, he called to mind all the events of the day. From the excurſion to Blackheath, he reflected on the loſs of the ring, and not with leſs bitterneſs on the loſs of his money: The ſituation of poor Catherine returned freſh to his remembrance: "I am the only friend," ſaid he, "to whom ſhe can look in her diſtreſs: I have pledged myſelf to aſſiſt her: ſhe is, without doubt, now liſtening anxiouſly to every foot, in hopes 'tis mine. What a diſappointment, when ſhe finds I do not come! What a wretch I muſt appear! Who knows, perhaps ſhe may think I meant to make a jeſt of her misfortunes. I have heard of ſuch things; and all this is through my own folly; what occaſion had I to play at cards with money that was not my own? for it certainly was not, when I had promiſed it to another perſon. What can I do? if I could but borrow the money! but it is vain to think of that, for I know Edward has not a ſixpence left. What can I do?—If I could but think of a way to raiſe it! if I had but any thing

thing I could ſell for the money—my watch—but that will be miſſed directly; and beſides, where can I ſell it—I ſuppoſe it is not cuſtomary for ſhop-keepers to purchaſe ſuch things—and yet poor Catherine, one would almoſt hazard every thing to keep one's word.—It is ſo ſhameful, ſo inhuman, to give her hopes, and then diſappoint them. But what will Sir John ſay, when he ſees me without the watch he ſo generouſly gave me? What can I ſay? he will certainly miſs it—ſuppoſe I have ſent it to be mended—but that will be a falſehood—I am already involved in one—I am grown very wicked! what would my father ſay! And yet poor Catherine! The watch, I am ſure, coſt four guineas—if I could ſell it for two, I could keep my word, and at leaſt eaſe my mind of one burthen—I am almoſt tempted; the holidays are now nearly half elapſed: Sir John may not miſs the watch—and then, I will ſave every farthing I get for pocket money, to replace it before the next—I will get up early to-morrow morning,

ing, and go into the firſt watch-makers I come to; if I can ſell it, I will—I muſt not think of the conſequences—I am very miſerable, one would hardly think how many faults one falſe ſtep leads one to commit! There is Sir John's ring—but I will think no more, I have promiſed Edward, and I muſt keep my word." Saying this, Charles undreſſed himſelf, and went to bed, but the anxiety of his mind kept him long awake, the night was far ſpent before he fell aſleep. Morning renewed his cares, and he began afreſh to revolve the project of the watch—ſometimes he thought of going to Catherine and acknowledging the truth, but this meaſure his pride forbad—then he thought of writing, but that was as irkſome—in ſhort, reflection only involved him in freſh perplexity; the watch was at laſt doomed, and Charles repaired with it to a ſhop; where, with a confuſion that did not eſcape obſervation, he offered to ſell it. The watch-maker, having looked attentively on Charles, and then on the watch, aſked what he demanded.

manded." Charles replied, "that he thought it worth three guineas; but was very glad to take two and half, which the ſhop-keeper offered. With this, he haſtened to Catherine; and putting a guinea and a half into her hand, "There, Catherine," ſaid he, "is the money; I am ſorry I diſappointed you laſt night, but I could not help it."

Poor Catherine's eyes ſparkled with joy; ſhe called him her preſerver—her good angel, and could not find words to expreſs her gratitude.

"I hope," ſaid Charles, "that it will anſwer the purpoſe you wiſh, and that it may pleaſe God to reſtore you." Then, diſengaging himſelf as ſoon as poſſible, he proceeded homeward. The happineſs he had communicated to poor Catherine conveyed ſuch joy to his heart, that for a time he ſeemed to forget the means he had taken to procure it, as alſo the diſagreeable buſineſs in which he was involved with Edward. He ſauntered on, enjoying the coolneſs of the morning, till, in

paſſing

paſſing a ſhop-window, his eye was inſenſibly attracted bythe prettieſt etui he had ever ſeen.

" What a charming preſent," ſaid Charles, " that would be for my mother! if I had but money to purchaſe it: but there is the vexation," continued he, with a ſigh, " without money, one cannot come at any thing." Then Charles began to think of the guinea that remained of the ſum he had gained for the watch: This he had firmly reſolved to hoard careſully, and to add to it every penny he could get, till he had accumulated ſufficient to replace Sir John's preſent; nevertheleſs he was tempted to go in and aſk the price of the etui. It was eight ſhillings: Charles thought it too much; but when the ſhopkeeper aſſured him it was a very great bargain, and ſhewed him others of higher price, which, in his opinion, were not half ſo pretty, his reſolution was ſhaken; he began to reflect that it would not be ſo very difficult to raiſe the value of the watch he wiſhed to replace, even though he ſhould

ſhould purchaſe the etui: "In a few days," ſaid he, "I ſhall viſit my god-mother, who never fails to make me a preſent; and Sir John, I am certain, will not ſuffer me to leave town without marks of his generoſity; then there will be my weekly allowance, I can ſave that." In ſhort, he purchaſed the etui: and, while the ſhopkeeper was counting out the change, his eye was unfortunately caught by a pretty little netting-caſe. His ſiſter Mary, who was a great netter, immediately was preſent to his mind; it was impoſſible to reſiſt—the netting-caſe was purchaſed; but Charles would not have left the ſhop quite pennyleſs, had not a ſmall pocket-caſe of inſtruments for drawing attracted his notice. This could not be reſiſted; it was ſo ſmall—ſo neat—ſo compact—the very thing he wanted. The watch was for the moment forgotten, and the caſe of inſtruments added to the etui and netting-caſe.

"Though Sir John Bentley poſſeſſed one of the moſt humane and benevolent hearts in the world, his manners were auſtere

auſtere and reſerved. It ſo happened, that on this morning, upon the appearance of Charles at the breakfaſt-table, he addreſſed him with a greater ſhare of complacency than uſual: ſuch, is the effect of guilt, that Charles could not ſummon reſolution to look his benefactor in the face: Every kind word Sir John addreſſed to him, ſeemed a reproach to his diſſimulation; every time he met his eye, it ſeemed to penetrate into his inmoſt thoughts. As for Edward, who was more hardened in vice, his feelings were leſs ſuſceptible: he exulted mightily in the thought of having ſo cleverly tricked his father: the ring indeed ſometimes gave him uneaſineſs, but then it was for fear the truth, by ſome unlucky accident, ſhould be diſcovered; as long as it remained concealed, he was happy; if it is poſſible for guilt to be ſo.

"Things remained in this ſtate three days, during which time Charles heartily repented his imprudence, but fooliſhly thought that he had gone too far to retract: his conſcience continually upbraided him with

with his conduct, and he was in hourly fear of being interrogated concerning the ring or the watch, which laſt he reſolved to ſay he had ſent to the watchmakers to be ſet to rights. The dreadful moment, however, at length arrived; Charles was ſent for into the ſtudy of Sir John, which he entered with a beating heart, though with more confidence than uſual. Let the reader judge how every fear was awakened, when he perceived there the very man to whom he had ſold the watch, and the identical watch in the hand of Sir John! The perſon to whom Charles had ſold the watch was the very ſame of whom Sir John had purchaſed it. The watchmaker knew the watch, and obſerving the confuſion of Charles, whom he had frequently obſerved paſs his ſhop, in company with Maſter Bentley, when he offered it to ſale, ſuſpected ſomething more was in the matter than Sir John knew: unwilling, however, to proceed on uncertain grounds, he reſolved to pay the price, and keep the watch till he had an audience with Sir John, who, the

reader

reader will conclude, was much ſurpriſed at the unfolding of the affair. The firſt queſtion that naturally aroſe from the ſubject, when the culprit appeared before him, was the cauſe of a proceeding ſo extraordinary? Charles could make no reply, but ſhame and confuſion were ſtrongly pictured in his countenance. Sir John repeated the queſtion, but Charles was ſtill ſilent; the fear of bringing Catherine into trouble for having received ſuch a ſum, without the knowledge of his parents or patron, made him prefer any ſubterfuge to that noble candour, which alone could have excuſed his errors. Being no longer able to oppoſe ſilence to the repeated interrogations of Sir John, he replied, "That he met a poor woman in the ſtreet, and that he had aſſiſted her with part of the money." "But," replied Sir John, "three days ago you had, to my knowledge, a guinea and a half in your purſe; you could therefore have followed the dictates of humanity, without making ſuch a ſacrifice: What did you do with that money?" This was a

queſtion

queſtion Charles did not expect, and was unprepared to anſwer, without divulging the expedition to Blackheath. He heſitated—he did not know what to ſay—and at laſt produced the etui, the caſe of inſtruments, and the netting-box.

"Sir John was extremely diſpleaſed: "I fear, Charles," ſaid he, "I have been deceived in the opinion I firſt formed of you; for a boy who can, unpreſſed by neceſſity, proceed to ſuch lengths, muſt neceſſarily be unbounded in his deſires, and conſequently unworthy my countenance and protection."

"Charles threw himſelf at the feet of his benefactor, and entreated to be forgiven; but Sir John, highly inſenſed at his conduct, left the room with indignation, and from that time behaved towards Charles with a coolneſs and reſerve that wounded him in the tendereſt part; as it convinced him he had entirely loſt the confidence and good opinion of his patron. Nor was this all; the ſtory of the watch was circulated throughout the whole houſe,

and

and indeed the whole neighbourhood: every one cenſured him; every one exclaimed againſt his ingratitude, in ſetting ſo little value upon a watch, the gift of his benefactor; and ſuſpected, as he had diſcovered ſuch a want of principle in one inſtance, that other faults of the ſame nature remained behind, yet undiſcovered. Charles now ſincerely repented his folly, but was ſtill weak enough to believe he had gone too far to retract. All he had courage to do was, repeatedly, to ſolicit Edward to acknowledge the expedition to Blackheath, and its conſequences reſpecting the ring; but Edward, encouraged by its remaining ſo long concealed, was deaf to his entreaties; and, to confeſs the truth, Charles himſelf was ſo much intimdated, by the diſgrace he had already ſuffered, that he had not courage to preſs his friend home to a confeſſion, which he was ſenſible muſt involve him in further. A fortnight elapſed before the dreadful time of enquiry arrived; but the ring was then

then miſſed, the ſervants interrogated, and every corner of the houſe ſearched.

" The queſtion of enquiry was then put to our two young gentlemen: Edward, I am ſhocked to relate, declared with a firm voice and unbluſhing cheek, that he had not ſeen the ring, nor knew even the place where it was kept. Charles did the ſame; but that agitation, which will ever be the attendant on guilt, where the heart is not wholly corrupt, joined to the ill opinion entertained of him on account of his late diſgrace, conſpired to fix the ſuſpicions on him. Sir John, judging from the affair of the watch, was perſuaded he had either loſt or ſold the ring; and having in vain endeavoured to draw from him the truth, confined him to his chamber, with orders that he ſhould have no other food than bread and water till he confeſſed. Edward's fears were, upon this occaſion, ſeriouſly awakened: he doubted not but Charles would now be brought to diſcover the whole, and repented having ſo ſtrenuouſly denied the truth, which he was ſen-

ſible would incenſe his father more than the fault itſelf: he reſolved, therefore, to exert the influence he well knew he poſſeſſed over his friend, to prevent the conſequences he ſo much dreaded. With this view, he went to him; and having condoled with him on his diſgrace, aſſured him, if he could have thought his father would have laid the blame on him, he would have confeſſed the truth at firſt; but he added, that now he had ſo ſtrenuouſly denied it, he could not recant, without incenſing his father to the laſt degree. By theſe artful apologies, he ſo far won upon Charles, that he was weak enough to perſiſt in the falſehood, the diſcovery of which, Edward artfully hinted, would not only ruin him, and more deeply involve himſelf, but alſo ruin poor George, who had acted entirely from his perſuaſions.

"In the mean while, Sir John having advertiſed the ring in the public papers, without ſucceſs, fully convinced that

Charles

Charles was no ſtranger to its fate, reſolved, ſince neither the puniſhment he had inflicted, nor the entreaties he uſed, could induce him to diſcover the truth, to try what effect the diſgrace of being diſmiſſed his family would produce; a meaſure which he adopted the more readily, as the conduct of Charles, in this inſtance and in that of the watch, made him appear by no means a proper companion for his ſon.

Words cannot deſcribe the feelings of Charles upon this occaſion: the thought of being thus ſhamefully diſmiſſed the family of his patron operated ſo forcibly on his mind, that he reſolved, let the conſequence be what it would, to confeſs every thing. He was making his way with this deſign to Sir John's ſtudy, when, in croſſing the hall, he unfortunately encountered Edward, who ſtopped to enquire whither he was going in ſuch haſte? Charles, with a ſorrowful countenance, owned, that, unable longer to ſupport the diſpleaſure of

Sir John, he was actually going to confeſs the truth.

" Edward, much alarmed at this intelligence, by his tears and entreaties, once more ſhook the reſolution of his friend. He entreated him, for his ſake, to be ſilent, at leaſt for the preſent; aſſuring him that he would endeavour to ſoften the reſentment of his father, and at a proper opportunity acknowledge the truth. Charles was as uſual ſoftened—he wept—he expoſtulated—but in the end yielded; and, with an aching heart, ſet out a few hours after in the ſtage coach for the peaceful manſion of his father, at which he arrived toward evening the enſuing day.

" How delicious would have been the embraces of his honoured parents—his beloved ſiſters—had Charles been conſcious of deſerving them! but guilt can poiſon the pureſt pleaſures.

" Mr. and Mrs. Weldon, alarmed at the ſettled gloom that appeared on the countenance of their ſon, enquired earneſtly after the health and welfare of the family

he

he had left, and were much relieved when aſſured they were well: but when Charles, burſting into tears, delivered a letter, with which he was charged by Sir John, a thouſand alarming conjectures were in an inſtant formed. Among them, the miſconduct of their beloved Charles never once occurred. Let the reader then judge what they felt, when informed it had been ſuch, That,' for the ſake of his ſon's *morals*, Sir John could no longer think of continuing Charles at the ſame ſchool; though, to ſoften the ſtroke, he added, he would defray the expence of his education, at any other his father ſhould chuſe.

"Mr. Weldon read this letter, with an emotion better felt than deſcribed. Had Charles loſt the countenance of his patron upon any other occaſion, he could have borne it with fortitude; but this baffled all his philoſophy: he threw himſelf into a chair, pale and trembling, and bending an eye of enquiry on his ſon, ſeemed to demand the explanation he wiſhed, yet dreaded to hear.

"Charles, when he left London, had, by the advice of Edward, formed the reſolution of keeping the truth concealed from his family; but though he had withſtood the reproaches of his conſcience, and the diſgrace of being diſmiſſed the family of his patron, he could not the diſtreſs of his father: he threw himſelf in an agony at his feet, embraced his knees, and as diſtinctly as the agitation of his mind would permit, gave a detail of the unfortunate expedition to Blackheath, with all its attendant conſequences.

"Unhappy boy," ſaid Mr. Weldon, having liſtened attentively to the detail, "the flexibility of your temper has undone you. Into what a labyrinth of diſgrace has it not plunged you!"

"O father," ſaid Charles, in a voice interrupted by tears, "I ſee my errors; but it is now too late: I have loſt the favour of Sir John—diſgraced myſelf in the opinion of every one—made you miſerable—." He could ſay no more.

"Mr.

"Mr. Weldon perceived, and even pitied his anguiſh;" you have indeed, my child, ſaid he, "done all this: it remains only now, to make all the reparation in your power: Sir John muſt immediately be acquainted with the truth; the poſt ſets out——"

"O father," interrupted Charles, "indeed I cannot acquaint Sir John—I have promiſed Edward—I have ſuffered a great deal for his ſake—and after all, to betray him! indeed, father, I cannot."

"Truth," ſaid Mr. Weldon, "is the only reparation you can now make, and you owe it equally to Sir John—your friend Edward—and yourſelf."——

"Edward," ſaid Charles, "would, I am ſure, never forgive me! he has denied it ſo often to Sir John—it would ſo expoſe him."——

"If Edward," ſaid Mr. Weldon, "ſucceeds in concealing this fault, it will encourage him to commit greater; from one ſtep he will proceed to another, till, in the end, he will not ſtop at the worſt of

crimes. Would you, Charles, to ſave your friend a momentary chagrine, expoſe him to a ſerious evil?"

"I am ſure, father," replied Charles, "if Edward has ſuffered the tenth part of what I have, he will never more be guilty of a falſehood—if I had but confeſſed the truth before I left London, I ſhould have been happy—but now, indeed, father, I cannot; it will appear juſt as if I left Edward to bear the whole weight of Sir John's diſpleaſure, and had neither courage nor friendſhip to ſhare it with him."

"I will not ſay," replied Mr. Weldon, "that it may not have that appearance, but the mortification you may ſuffer, on this, and every other point, is a juſt puniſhment for the obſtinacy with which you perſiſted in the falſehood you had once told."

"But Father,"——

"Say no more," ſaid Mr. Weldon, "in a tone of authority, that had never yet failed to excite the obedience of his ſon, no time is now to be loſt; the poſt

ſets

ſets out at nine, and truth, as I obſerved before, is the only attonement you can now make for your paſt errors."

"Charles ventured not to reply; he followed his father in ſilence to the ſtudy, where, being furniſhed with pen and ink, he ſat down, and with a trembling hand, wrote a circumſtantial account of the train of events, that had brought on his preſent diſgrace; generouſly taking every opportunity in the courſe of the narrative, to paliate, (though frequently at his own expence,) the faults of his friend. This letter was immediately diſpatched to Sir John, and Charles, though in other reſpects, eaſed of a burden that had long oppreſſed his heart, was for a week, on Edward's account, a prey to very painful ſenſations: at length, one day, as he ſtood at a window that looked into the road, he ſaw a coach, which he knew to be that of his benefactor, draw up to the gate. Sir John alighted, followed by his ſon, and was received by Mr. Weldon and his Lady, with every mark of reſpect and

friendſhip, though the recollection of their ſon's diſgrace, gave a check to that cheerfulneſs, which his preſence uſually inſpired."

Charles, alone, wanted courage to advance, till Sir John, compaſſionating his embarraſſment and confuſion, encouraged him by a ſmile of invitation.

"Ah, Sir," ſaid he, "with diffidence, approaching, my faults are too great to be forgiven: I am unworthy—" and here he ſtopped.

"As I am willing," ſaid Sir John, "to believe your repentance ſincere, and as though late, you have made for your errors, all the attonement in your power, by an avowal of the truth, I will not add to thoſe ſtings, guilt will ever bring along with it, by reproaches: I will do more, I will endeavour to forget the paſt, ſo ſaying, he held out his hand to him, in token of reconciliation."

"Ah, Sir," ſaid Charles, "I am unworthy this goodneſs: it wounds me more than the ſevereſt reproaches. Then turning

ing to his friend, Edward, ſaid he, we have both done wrong—can you forgive me?"

"Dear Charles," ſaid Edward, "embracing him, I ought to aſk forgiveneſs of you, I have led you into many errors: had it not been for me."—

"Do not accuſe yourſelf," interrupted Charles, "I only am to blame; had I, with a proper firmneſs, reſiſted your ſolicitations, reflection would have recalled you to your duty."

"You have been both to blame," ſaid Sir John, "but I hope your paſt errors, will teach you the advantage, that truth will ever have over falſehood: had you ſtopped at the firſt fault, how much diſgrace would you not have ſpared to yourſelves, and anguiſh of mind to your friends!"

Sir John, then to the joy of all preſent, acquainted them, that he had recovered the diamond ring, which Edward had loſt, you have, without doubt, ſaid he, addreſſing Mr. and Mrs. Weldon, heard that

I advertiſed it in the public papers: I gained no information concerning it, till about half an hour after the departure of Charles, when it was brought to me by a woman, who ſaid, ſhe had found it about a fortnight before, upon Blackheath. As one of my principle motives for wiſhing to recover the ring, was, that I might be enabled to diſcover, by whom it had been detained, I made ſome enquiries, which led the woman to inform me, that having ſhewn the ring to a man who kept a public houſe upon Black-heath, he ſaid, he doubted not, but it was the ſame, two young gentlemen who ſpent the day at his houſe, a few days before, had loſt; and that he was perſuaded it would be advertiſed."

"Reſolved," continued Sir John, "to purſue my enquiry further, I ſet out for Black-heath, and by the deſcription, the publican, at my requeſt, gave of the lads, to whom he alluded, I was fully perſuaded, I had been impoſed on by my ſon. I reproached him on my return, with his duplicity

duplicity, and drew from him a full confeſſion of his guilt."

"You, my dear Weldon, who are yourſelf a father, can alone judge, what I felt, when my ſuſpicions were changed into certainty."

"Edward beheld the anguiſh of my mind; my ſufferings, I believe touched him; his tears flowed abundantly—I hope they were ſincere—but can we truſt him, who has once deceived us"?

"O Father," ſaid Edward, "burſting into tears, my puniſhment is great; but it is juſt; while I poſſeſſed your confidence, I abuſed it—I eſteemed it lightly; now, only that I have for ever loſt, am I ſenſible of its true value."

"Your conduct, Edward," ſaid Sir John, "has given to mine, and to your mother's heart, a wound, which time only, and your reformation can heal; in the hope of that, as much as poſſible, will we obliterate the remembrance of the paſt; but neither muſt yourſelf or Charles, expect to poſſeſs the confidence we formerly

repoſed

repoſed in you, till a long courſe of rectitude has proved the ſincerity of your repentance."

"Charles and his friend, ſighed deeply; never were they before ſo completely humbled; Charles eſpecially, whoſe feelings were more acute than thoſe of Edward, when he reflected, how low his conduct had ſunk him in his own, and in the opinion of all around him, was inexpreſſibly hurt, and in bitterneſs, lamented his folly: "O my dear Edward," ſaid he, "graſping the hand of his friend, let us, from henceforth, invariably adhere to truth; let us be cautious of deviating in the ſmalleſt degree from the path of duty, out of which, I am convinced, there is no happineſs."

"Ah! Charles," replied Edward, "had I liſtened to your advice, we had both been happy."

Sir John concluding from the contrition, that appeared in the countenance and expreſſions of his ſon and Charles, that his diſcourſe had made the impreſſion

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he wiſhed, entered upon other topicks, and having chatted half an hour with Mr. and Mrs. Weldon, took his leave, telling Charles, at parting, to hold himſelf in readineſs, as Edward would ſet off for ſchool, in a few days. This hint, which ſignified to Charles, that he was to accompany his friend, joined to the thought, that a poſſibility ſtill remained, of regaining one day, however diſtant, the confidence he had loſt, inſpired him with a joy, to which, ſince the moment of his tranſgreſſion, he had been a ſtranger. Two days after, his heart dilated with another pleaſure: Catherine, in a letter, ſhe addreſſed to Mrs. Weldon, ſetting forth her obligations to Charles, acquainted her, that ſhe had already received ſuch benefit from the bath waters, that ſhe doubted not, being able in a few weeks, to engage in a ſervice.

This letter, communicated joy to every part of this worthy family, and to none more than to Charles, who, with pleaſure, ſaw a parcel made up from the wardrobe

of

of his mother and ſiſters, diſpatched to her, with a little purſe, to which, each of the young ladies contributed to their utmoſt.——

The day in which the young gentlemen were to depart for ſchool, at length, arrived; when Mr. Weldon addreſſed his ſon to this effect:——"My dear Charles, do not forget that your errors have originated from the inſtability of your mind: had you poſſeſſed that noble firmneſs, which, if not the baſis, is the ſafe guard of every virtue, you would not, againſt your reaſon, and better judgment, have conſented to accompany your friend, upon an expedition, which your heart diſapproved: this expoſed you to a temptation, which was the conſequence of another error; I mean, that of riſquing, againſt your principle and inclination, money, which being promiſed to another, was no longer your own; to repair this error, another was committed, your watch, the gift of your benefactor, was

was ſold, and to conceal this, a lie followed :"

" But what ſhall I ſay to that weakneſs which led you, in complaiſance to another, to impoſe on your benefactor, by a lie, which, though ever of a heinous nature, was, on this occaſion, agravated : could you aſſure yourſelf, that the ſuſpicion of theft, might not fall upon an innocent perſon ? Fortunately you was yourſelf, the victim of your weakneſs and duplicity ; the mind of Sir John, already prepared by the myſtery that hung over the watch, readily entertained ſuſpicions to your diſadvantage : he believed you no ſtranger to the fate of his ring, and was perſuaded, if you had not taken it with an intent to wrong him, you had inadvertently loſt it, and were too obſtinate to own your fault. Your faltering voice, and guilty countenance, confirmed theſe ſuſpicions, and you were juſtly puniſhed, by a diſgraceful diſmiſſion from the family.

" A gentle and complying temper, my dear Charles, is amiable, but unleſs accompanied by diſcretion, will lead you,

as you have proved by experience, into the moſt dangerous errors: to yield, where we know it is our duty to reſiſt, is a weakneſs for which it is difficult to form an excuſe: firſt, be aſſured that your principles are juſt, and then let it be your glory, to act in conformity to them—but, I ſee the coach at the door; adieu my dear boy; let my words ſink deep into your heart, and remember, that the affection you entertain for a father, whoſe happineſs or miſery, it is in your power, in a great meaſure, to conſtitute, can only be proved by the rectitude of your future conduct."

Charles had ſcarcely time to aſſure his father, he would treaſure his admonitions, before he was ſummoned to attend his friend Edward; he, therefore, in haſte, affectionately embraced his father—his mother—his ſiſters—and departed for ſchool. There, by the rectitude of his conduct, he, in proceſs of time, (for bad impreſſions are not eaſily effaced) obliterated, the remembrance of his former errors, regained the confidence of his patron,

tron, and became the pride of his parents, and the delight of all around him.

Edward, too, purſuing the example of his friend, became eminent for his virtues, and found by experience, that the higheſt happineſs is that of performing our duty.

"I ſhall make no comment," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "on my ſtory, as I am perſuaded, if it has failed to amuſe, you have too much good ſenſe not to profit by the moral it contains."

The young folk aſſured her they were both edified and amuſed; and William declared, it would be a leſſon to him, when he returned to ſchool, not to ſuffer himſelf, as he had often, to be laughed or perſuaded out of what he knew to be right. Tea was then brought in, and the young folk, after their evening walk, retired to reſt, perfectly ſatisfied with the amuſements of the day.

The next morning Mrs. Mills, having ſome buſineſs at a neighbouring farm, pro-

poſed

poſed a ride thither to her young friends, who every hour more charmed with the ſociety of their aunt, expreſſed the pleaſure they felt in the thought of attending her. The carriage was therefore ordered, and ſoon after breakfaſt they ſet out for the farm; the miſtreſs of it, who was the picture of neatneſs and good-humour, with a train of little ones, came out to meet them. Mrs. Mills, with her uſual affability, enquired after the reſt of her family, and ſaid, ſhe had brought her nephew and niece to ſee the farm.

Mrs. Goodman replied, ſhe ſhould be happy to ſhew the young lady and gentleman the little that was worth their notice; but added, that ſhe hoped Mrs. Mills would permit them firſt to take ſuch refreſhment as the houſe afforded. Saying this, ſhe conducted her gueſts into a neat parlour, and ſet before them ſome home-baked bread, curds and cream, and cowſlip wine, a repaſt which was extremely agreeable to the young folk, whoſe appetite was ſharpened by the ride.

The

Afterwards the good woman, at the requeſt of Mrs. Mills, conducted them into an adjacent meadow, to view a brood of beautiful ducklings. Clara admired the delicacy of their plumage, and as ſhe ſaw the little creatures enjoying the coolneſs of the running ſtream that watered the meadow, expreſſed her ſurpriſe that their feathers did not appear wet.

"Providence," ſaid Mrs. Mills, who embraced every opportunity of informing the minds of her young friends, "has furniſhed birds, and eſpecially water-fowl, at the extremity of the body, with a little bag, containing a kind of oil with which they anoint and dreſs their feathers, to render them impenetrable to the wet. You muſt certainly have obſerved how frequently all kind of birds draw the bill over the feathers: it is a very neceſſary employment; for, without it, their flight would be obſtructed by every ſhower of rain, as the feathers, by imbibing the water, would become heavy and unfit for uſe. It is obſerved, that poultry which

live under a covert are provided with a leſs quantity of this oil than thoſe birds which inhabit the open air."

From hence Mrs. Goodman took them to her granary—her dairy, which was neatneſs itſelf—her hay ricks—nor did ſhe forget her pig-ſties, which were perfectly clean, and littered with ſtraw, wiſhing her gueſts to obſerve a fine fat ſow, which lay baſking in one of them, with a numerous litter of pigs, ſcarcely a fortnight old.—She next conducted them to the poultry-yard, where, taking a baſket, ſhe ſcattered ſome corn, and called the feathered tribe about her. At the well-known ſound, they came trooping from all parts; but ſcarcely were they arrived, when a candidate of a different kind put them to flight. This was no other than a tortoiſe-ſhell cat, which made way for a fine white hen that followed her. The hen, without ceremony, fell upon the grain, and puſs, like a faithful guard, ſtood by to keep off intruders, till ſhe had eaten her fill: after which, ſhe walked off in triumph with her charge,

leaving

leaving the coaſt clear to the reſt of the poultry, which immediately ſucceeded. This ſcene was not more new to the young folk than to Mrs. Mills: that an animal ſhould diſcover ſuch affectionate ſolicitude for a creature it was its nature to deſtroy ſurpriſed her, and her ſurpriſe was not leſſened by the account the farmer's wife gave of this extraordinary circumſtance: * "You muſt know, madam," ſaid ſhe, "that our puſs has been the nurſe to that fowl: When firſt hatched, it was a poor little puny thing; I took it from the hen, ſeeing it did not thrive, wrapt it in a bit of flannel, and kept it in a baſket by the fire, hoping the warmth would revive it. I took a world of trouble, but it grew worſe and worſe, till at laſt its poor eyes cloſed, and I really thought it dying. I was ſo vexed to think of the time I had ſpent upon it to no purpoſe, that I threw it in a pet to the cat, who lay aſleep by the fire, in my huſband's arm-

* The above is really a fact.

chair.

chair. I thought, to be ſure, ſhe would have ſnapt it up, and put it out of its pain in a moment; but, would you believe it, madam? ſhe lifted up her leg, and received it as though it had been her kitten! Yes, madam, ſhe purred over it, and the little creature ſeemed to revive by her warmth. I was ſo ſurpriſed that I could ſcarcely believe my eyes; and my huſband was not leſs ſo, when he came home from work, to ſee the cat nurſing the chicken, with as much tenderneſs as if it had been her kitten. You may be ſure, Madam, we did not take it from her, except to feed it, which was a part of the buſineſs puſs, though in other reſpects an excellent nurſe, could not perform. In ſhort, ſhe ſeemed to receive it in the place of a litter of kittens we had juſt before drowned, and grew fonder and fonder of it every day. You ſee, madam, the chicken is now grown to a fine hen; puſs ſtill continues her attention; you have juſt ſeen a proof of it. She no ſooner hears me call the poultry than

ſhe

ſhe appears with her charge, which attends to her voice as it would have done to the cluck of the hen, and will not ſuffer one of the other fowls to touch a grain till her favourite hen is ſatisfied, when ſhe walks off, and leaves the reſt in quiet poſſeſſion of what remains."

"Well," ſaid William, "I am amazed, I could not have believed a cat capable of ſuch tenderneſs; I always thought them malicious and revengeful, and at ſchool have played them many a wicked prank."

"I have been told," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "that cats furniſh much cruel diverſion to ſchool-boys; but ſurely not to my William! he cannot tyrannize over a poor animal, merely becauſe it has not power to defend itſelf, and delight in tortures at which every heart, not callous to the feelings of humanity, muſt recoil."

"I cannot deny," replied William, "that I have joined our boys in many wicked pranks they played, eſpecially in hunting of cats; but indeed, aunt, I never reflected on what the poor animal muſt

have ſuffered. I thought only of my own amuſement; but, I aſſure you, I will never again join in ſuch cruel ſports."

"Remember, my dear boy," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "that God commands you to be merciful to all his creatures, and that he hears the cry of the weakeſt animal: then reflect on the happineſs which reſults from communicating pleaſure, and I am ſure you will not ſeek it in inflicting pain."

"But, aunt, I always thought cats very malicious and revengeful."

"Cats, William, like other animals, are ſenſible of good or bad treatment; if you uſe them well, they will careſs you; if ill, they will endeavour to retaliate."

"But they are certainly leſs faithful than dogs," replied William.

"Perhaps ſo," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "but there are many inſtances which prove them not deficient in point of attachment. I remember, a few years paſt, reading in a magazine of a cat, which diſcovered ſo ſtrong an attachment to a dog, that, ſeeing him one day engaged with another,

before

before her maſter's houſe, ſhe flew into the ſtreet, and fell upon the antagoniſt of her favourite with ſuch fury, that ſhe forced him, in the ſight of numerous ſpectators, to quit the field."

"But is there not," ſaid Clara, "in general, an antipathy between cats and dogs?"

"It appears ſo," replied Mrs. Mills; "but when they are bred together, it ſeems to ſubſide, and I have known many inſtances in which it has given place to cordial affection, which makes me the more readily give credit to the anecdote I have juſt related: but, without forcing nature from her general courſe, repeated inſtances prove that cats are capable of very ſtrong attachments."

"Well, aunt," ſaid William, "though you are ſuch an advocate for cats, you muſt allow, after all, they are of little uſe."

"I could tell you," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "of cats that were taught to hunt and deſtroy ſerpents; for ſo it is recorded they

did in the iſland of Cyprus; but the ſervices they render us in England are, in my opinion, ſufficient to exalt their fame, and entitle them to kind treatment."

"I do not," ſaid William, "recollect any ſervice they can do us, except the killing of a few rats and mice."

"Do you not think that," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "an eſſential ſervice?"

"Truly, aunt," returned William, "if cats can render us no greater ſervice, I do not think we have ſo much reaſon to value them. What harm can ſuch inſignificant creatures as rats and mice do us? To be ſure, they make free with a little of our bacon and cheeſe—but that is not worth the thinking of."

"Very true, William," ſaid Clara.

"Theſe inſignificant creatures," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "as William calls them, may be more formidable than either of you imagine: I once knew a gentleman whoſe houſe, in Scotland, was undermined, and the foundations ſhakened by rats."

"Indeed!"

"Indeed!"

"Yes; they came from a ſhip that touched at the port, and infeſted his houſe in ſuch numbers, that the foundations of it actually gave way; and the damage he ſuſtained from them, in this and other inſtances, was eſtimated at upwards of five hundred pounds."

"Was it poſſible!" ſaid Clara.

"There was ſcarcely a cheſt or a drawer in his houſe into which they did not penetrate: The linen was gnawed in holes—and as to the proviſions! ſugar—meat—bread—rice—corn—nothing eſcaped the ravages of theſe mercileſs ſpoilers."

"Well," ſaid William, "could one have thought it poſſible for ſo ſmall an animal as a rat to do ſuch miſchief!"

"So it was," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "and you cannot but confeſs the utility of the cat, which preſerves us from creatures which are capable of being ſo formidable."

"I ſee," ſaid William, "that Mrs.

Puſs is of more conſequence than I thought her."

"But, as I have acquainted you," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "with the plunders of theſe miſchievous animals, I muſt not forget the ingenuity with which ſome of them were executed: What do you think of their conveying eggs, unbroken, from the top of the houſe, which was three ſtory high, to the bottom?"

"Why, I think," ſaid William, "it was abſolutely impoſſible."

"I ſhould myſelf," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "have thought ſo, had I not been told it was a fact by my friend and his lady, upon whoſe veracity I can place the firmeſt reliance."

"Well," ſaid William, "I think it could be effected by nothing leſs than a miracle: do tell us, aunt, how it was."

"I am myſelf," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "ignorant how the buſineſs was performed; I can only tell you that, at the ſeaſon of the year when eggs are plenty, my friend, as it is cuſtomary in the north, greaſed a quantity,

quantity, and put them into a large ſtone jar, to preſerve them ſweet for uſe. A ſhort time after, ſhe was much ſurpriſed to find the eggs, which were in jars at the top of the houſe, conſiderably diminiſhed, though none had been uſed in the family. It was thought impoſſible this could be the work of the rats; but ſo it proved: On a ſtrict examination, the eggs, in part whole and part ſhells, with the meat ſucked out, were found in burrows made by the rats, at the bottom of the houſe."

"How could they poſſibly carry them, without breaking?" ſaid Clara.

"That is a myſtery, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "I cannot explain; I can only aſſure you, upon authority I cannot doubt, that the fact really happened."

"They muſt have rolled them down the ſtairs," ſaid William.

"Nay," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "in that caſe, they muſt inevitably have broken."——

"Oh," ſaid William, "I have juſt thought how they managed the buſineſs: I remember hearing my papa tell of a

friend of his, who once watched and ſaw one of theſe ingenious gentlemen hop down ſtairs, upon his hind legs, with ſome corn which he had taken from the garret, in his fore paws; I dare ſay, the rats you have been telling us about conveyed the eggs down in the ſame manner."

"It is very likely they might," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "but I think it equally probable that the buſineſs was effected by combination; that is to ſay, that more than one was concerned in it, though I cannot ſay whether performed exactly in the ſame manner Æſop repreſents in his fable of the two rats and the egg. Since I have known the anecdote of my friend's eggs, it has more than once occurred to me that it is poſſible the fable in Æſop might be founded upon a fact; I am perſuaded, that all animals have a language or ſign, by which they underſtand each other, as far as is neceſſary for their mutual benefit and preſervation; and that rats have a language, and act in concert, is evident from

from a curious anecdote that I will relate to you :"

" A gentleman having a preſent of ſome Florence oil, the flaſks were ſet in his cellar, in the bottom of a ſhallow box : the oil not being wanted for uſe, they remained there ſome time ; when the owner, going one day by chance into the cellar, was ſurpriſed to find the wicker-work, by which the flaſks were ſtopped, gnawed from the greater part, and, upon examination, the oil ſunk about two or two inches and a half from the neck of each flaſk. It ſoon occurred to him that it muſt be the work of ſome kind of vermin ; and being a man of a ſpeculative turn, he reſolved to ſatisfy the curioſity raiſed in his mind : he accordingly found means to watch, and actually detected three rats in the very fact : but how do you think they managed to get at the oil ? You know the neck of the flaſk was long and narrow ; it required therefore ſome contrivance.

" Indeed it did," ſaid William ; " but I dare ſay the rats found out a better ex-

pedient for themſelves than I ſhould for them."

"I told you three rats were engaged in the buſineſs," reſumed Mrs. Mills; "one of theſe ſtood upon the edge of the box, while another, mounting his back, dipped his tail into the neck of the flaſk, and preſented it to a third to lick: they then changed places, the rat which ſtood uppermoſt deſcended, and was accommodated in the ſame manner with the tail of his companion, till it was his turn to act the porter, and he took his ſtation at the bottom. In this manner the three rats alternately relieved each other, and banquetted upon the oil, till they had ſunk it beyond the length of their tails."

"Well," ſaid Clara, "if they were equal to ſuch a contrivance, they could be at no loſs to convey the eggs to their burrows without breaking; one may believe them capable of any thing: but is the ſtory really to be relied on?"

"I had it from the mouth of the gentleman who was himſelf witneſs of the fact; he

he was a man of character and ſpeculation, upon whoſe veracity I can entirely rely."

"Well," ſaid William, "it is a moſt extraordinary ſtory, but nothing can ſurpriſe me after puſs and her chicken, that exceeds every thing I ever heard of."

"It was a ſingular circumſtance," ſaid the Lady, "but I think Mrs. Goodman told us puſs had juſt loſt a litter of kittens?"

"Yes, madam," ſaid the farmer's wife, who had been liſtening with ſilent attention to the diſcourſe, "ſhe had kittened a few days before, and my huſband had drowned the litter."

"This circumſtance, then," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "accounts in ſome meaſure, for an attachment that appears otherwiſe, ſo foreign to the nature of the animal; we can find no difficulty in ſuppoſing, that the inſtinct, which nature had awakened in the cat, for the preſervation of her own young, deprived of its object, was eaſily transfer-

red to the chicken, upon which it acted with equal force."

"Well," ſaid William, "whatever might be the cauſe, it was a droll ſight, to ſee puſs march up the yard, with her feathered attendant; I declare it was worth riding five miles to ſee her."

Mrs. Mills, now thinking it time to take leave of their obliging hoſteſs, wiſhed her a good day, and ſtepped into the carriage, followed by her young friends, who returned extremely pleaſed with the farm, and its inhabitants, in whoſe countenance Clara thought ſhe obſerved more happineſs and content than ſhe had ever experienced in the poſſeſſion of thoſe gaities ſhe had, three days ago, conſidered as the chief bleſſings of life.

After dinner, Mrs. Mills aſked the young folk, in what manner they would amuſe themſelves, till the time of their evening walk? "Here is the piano forte; you are fond of muſic, my dear Clara—or ſhall we retire to the ſtudy? I have ſome books that I think will entertain you; or

or ſuppoſe we amuſe ourſelves in the picture gallery? there are ſome intereſting pieces, finely executed."

This laſt propoſal was preferred; for though Clara and William had every day paſſed through the gallery, to and from their chamber, they had not ſtopped to obſerve one of the pictures; the entertainment, therefore, was new to them; and Mrs. Mills, with her uſual kindneſs, rendered it doubly agreeable, by pointing out to them the beauties of each picture, and the different ſubject it repreſented: "That engaging figure," ſaid ſhe, pointing to a piece on her right hand, "repreſents Mahomned Akbar, Emperor of Indoſtan; he is deſcribed by the hiſtorians of his country as poſſeſſed of many virtues; but no part of his conduct ſhines more amiable than that which reſpects his Miniſter Byram, whom you ſee repreſented in the ſame piece. Byram, to whom Akbar's father, in a great meaſure, owed his reſtoration to the throne, from which he was baniſhed by the

treachery

treachery of his brothers, was appointed Regent of the kingdom during the minority of Akbar, who, though only fourteen when he aſcended the throne, gave an early inſtance of his wiſdom and confidence in this great man; for, finding his kingdom involved in dangerous wars, he called Byram to him, and addreſſing him by the title of Noble Baba, that is to ſay, father; he told him, "that he repoſed his whole truſt in his prudence and good conduct, and deſired he would take whatever meaſures he thought neceſſary for the defence and ſupport of his kingdom; at the ſame time aſſuring him, in the moſt ſolemn manner, that he would give no attention to any malicious inſinuations that might by his enemies be ſuggeſted to his prejudice."

"This prudent conduct of the young Emperor could not but engage the affection of Byram, by whoſe exertion he was ſoon ſettled peaceably upon the throne, and his kingdom in a flouriſhing ſtate: but, though Byram was an able ſtateſman, and

an

an experienced warrior, his diſpoſition was ſuſpicious and vindictive; he grew jealous of the favours beſtowed by his maſter upon others, and began to ſuſpect his affection eſtranged from him. On the other hand, the king inſenſed at ſome acts of ſeverity and injuſtice which he had committed, by power of his authority, though he ſtill perſonally reſpected Byram, thought it time to take the government of the kingdom upon himſelf, which he accordingly did, and the miniſter was diſſmiſſed from the regency.

" This ſo offended Byram, that he fell from his allegiance, and aſſembled troops, with an intent of conquering ſome part of his maſter's dominions, and founding an independant kingdom. The Emperor, hearing his deſign, ſent troops to quell his rebellion, and a battle enſued, in which Byram was defeated, ſeveral of his principal officers killed, and himſelf obliged to take refuge in the mountains. Where, reduced, at length, to the greateſt diſtreſs, he ſent one of his ſlaves to repreſent his

unfortunate

unfortunate ſituation, and to implore the king's mercy.

" It was, on this occaſion, that the character of this young monarch ſhone forth in its full luſtre; he inſtantly diſpatched one of his omrahs, to invite Byram to court; and that no mark of favour and diſtinction might be wanting, a conſiderable number of chiefs, were, by the orders of Akbar, ſent to meet him half way, and conduct him into his preſence. When Byram appeared before the Emperor, he hung his turban round his neck, in token of humiliation, and threw himſelf in tears at the foot of the throne. Akbar inſtantly raiſed, and placed him in his former ſtation, at the head of the omrahs; then, as a mark of peculiar honour, preſenting him with a ſplendid dreſs:" " If the Lord Byram," ſaid the generous young King, " loves a military life, he ſhall have the government of Calpé and Chinderi, in which he may exerciſe his martial genius; if he chooſe rather to remain

main at court, our favour ſhall not be wanting to the great benefactor of our family; but ſhould devotion engage the ſoul of Byram, to perform a pilgrimage to Mecca, he ſhall be eſcorted in a manner ſuitable to his dignity."

Byram replied, "The royal confidence and friendſhip for me muſt now be diminiſhed; nay, loſt: why then ſhould I remain in the preſence? the clemency of the king is enough for me, and his and his forgiveneſs of my late errors, a ſufficient reward for my former ſervices. Let then the unfortunate Byram turn his face from this world to another, and purſue his pilgrimage to Mecca."

"The Emperor aſſented to his requeſt, and ordered for him a proper retinue, with 50,000 rupees a-year, to ſupport his dignity. Byram, however, did not enjoy the bounty of his maſter, being baſely aſſaſſinated, in his way to Mecca, by one, whoſe father he had killed in battle."

The young folk thanked their aunt for the information ſhe had given them,

and

and expreſſed their admiration of a conduct ſo noble as that of the young Emperor.

"I am particularly pleaſed," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "with that part of his ſpeech, which reverts to the ſervices of his miniſter; "our favour," ſays Akbar, "ſhall not be wanting to the *great benefactor of our family*," with the view, no doubt, of ſoftening the poignancy of Byram's remorſe, and leſſening the weight of the obligations, with which he was overwhelming him."

"It was indeed very generous" ſaid William, "how Byram's heart muſt have ſmote him, when he found how generouſly he was treated."

"Undoubtedly," ſaid Mrs. Mills "it did; we may be aſſured the kindneſs of his maſter wounded him, more than the ſevereſt reproaches. The Painter has in the piece before us deſcribed, in lively colours, the ſhame, grief, and admiration, that Byram muſt have felt when introduced into the preſence of his maſter, and treated with ſo much generoſity: on the other

other hand, what generous pity and benignity beams in the countenance of the young Prince, as he raiſes the proſtrate miniſter, to place him in his former dignity!—but as we are ſpeaking of the heroes of Indoſtan, obſerve the picture which is oppoſite: the principal figure is Durgetti, queen of Gurat, celebrated for her beauty and accompliſhments."

"She is clothed in armour," obſerved Clara, "and mounted on an elephant."

"Yes," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "it was formerly the cuſtom of many eaſtern nations to uſe elephants in war; but ſince muſkets and cannon have been introduced, the elephants, being frighted at the noiſe of artillery, prove more dangerous than uſeful in battle.

"The extent of Durgetti's dominions were very ſmall, not exceeding three hundred miles in length, and one in breadth; but ſo flouriſhing was this ſmall tract, that it comprehended more than 70 thouſand towns and villages, well inhabited. Aſaph, the governor of a neighbouring province, allured by the riches of this kingdom, marched

marched againſt it; the queen, with a force equally powerful, prepared to oppoſe him. She led her troops to action, as you ſee the artiſt has repreſented in the in the picture, clad in armour, and mounted on a caſtle upon an elephant, with a bow and quiver lying at her ſide, and a lance in her hand. Her troops were in general unacquainted with war, but the noble example of their queen, and the love of their native independance, inſpired every breaſt with courage, and they repulſed the enemy with ſuch fury, that they left ſix hundred horſemen dead on the field, and purſued the reſt, with great ſlaughter. Night coming on, the queen halted with her army, and gave orders to her troops that they might be ready to make an attack upon the enemy before they recovered from their conſternation: but her miniſters and chiefs oppoſed this meaſure, and inſiſted upon returning to the field of battle, to bury their friends. The queen reluctantly conſented; and after the bodies of the ſlain, according to the

the cuſtom of the country, were burnt, again ſolicited her chiefs to accompany her to ſtorm the Mogul camps. They, however, wanting her courage and prudence, vainly imagined the enemy would of their own accord evacuate the country, and refuſed to ſecond the daring enterpriſe of their queen. Fatally were they deceived. Aſaph attacked them the next morning with his heavy artillery, which he had the day before left behind on account of the badneſs of the roads. The queen advanced, upon the approach of Aſaph, to a narrow paſs, to oppoſe him; but he quickly opened himſelf a way into the plain beyond, where the army was drawn up in order for battle. Prince Biar, the queen's ſon, a youth of great hopes, exhibited prodigies of valour; till being wounded, he became faint with the loſs of blood, when his mother, who was mounted on an elephant, in the front of the battle, ſeeing him ready to fall from his horſe, called to ſome of her people to bear him from the field. The loſs of the

prince,

prince, and of many who quitted the field with him, ſtruck ſuch a panic into the reſt, that the unfortunate queen was left only with three hundred men in the field. She, however, no ways affected with her deſperate ſituation, ſtood her ground, with her former fortitude, till ſhe received an arrow in the eye; in endeavouring to extricate it, part of the ſteal broke ſhort, and remained behind. In the mean time, another arrow paſſed through her neck, which ſhe alſo drew out; but nature ſinking under the pain, ſhe fainted: recovering, however, by degrees, a brave officer of her houſehold, who drove her elephant, ſingly repulſed numbers of the enemy, where ever he turned the outrageous animal. He begged permiſſion, as the day was now irretrievable, to carry the queen from the field, a propoſal which ſhe rejected with diſdain."

"It is true," ſaid ſhe, "we are overcome in war, but ſhall we ever be vanquiſhed in honour? ſhall we, for the ſake of lingering out an ignominious life, loſe

the

the reputation and virtue we have been ſo ſolicitous to acquire? no; let your gratitude repay the ſervice for which I raiſed you, and which I now require at your hands: haſte, let your dagger ſave me from the crime of putting a period to my own exiſtence."

"Adhar, which was the name of the officer, burſt into tears, and begged, as the elephant was ſwift of foot, that he might be permitted to carry her from the field, to place in ſafety. In the mean time, the queen finding the enemy crouded faſt around her, ſuddenly leaned forward, and ſeizing Adhar's dagger, plunged it into her boſom, and expired.

"The death of the queen rendered Aſaph's victory complete. A few days after he beſieged the fortreſs of Jora, where all the treaſures of this noble family had been preſerved for ten generations. The young prince, a little recovered from his wounds, bravely exerted himſelf, and loſt his life in defence of his kingdom, and independence."

"What

"What a pity it is, aunt," ſaid William, "that there is ſuch a thing as war! how many it makes miſerable."

"In the preſent ſtate of the world," replied Mrs. Mills, "war is ſometimes neceſſary; but then it muſt be undertaken in defence of our lives, property, or independence. We turn with diſguſt and horror from the individual, who, hurried on by an inſatiable thirſt of wealth or power, calmly ſacrifices thouſands of his ſpecies in purſuit of idols, which, when attained, can afford an imperfect, and at beſt, but a tranſient, ſatisfaction. We feel very differently intereſted for Aſaph, whoſe ſole object was the riches of the kingdom of Gurat, and for the queen who ſo nobly exerted herſelf to preſerve the independence and property of her ſubjects."

"Certainly we do, aunt," ſaid Clara; "but pray, do you think the queen of Gurat did right to kill herſelf?"

"Can you aſk ſuch a queſtion?" replied Mrs. Mills; "it is an action which ſullies all her former glories: The ignorance

rance of the age and country in which ſhe lived, where it was held more noble to die than to ſuffer the ignominy of captivity, might paleiate the crime, did it not appear from the words ſhe addreſſed to her faithful officer, 'Haſte, let your dagger ſave me from the *crime* of putting an end to my exiſtence,' that ſhe did not err entirely through ignorance. Let us, therefore, paying a juſt tribute of praiſe to her courage and magnanimity, draw a veil over her errors." Saying this, Mrs. Mills called the attention of her young friends to other pictures, and having entertained them with ſeveral pleaſing anecdotes that occurred to her, upon reviewing each: "That," ſaid ſhe, "is Alfred, one of our Britiſh kings, diſguiſed as a harper in the Daniſh camp."

Clara enquired the cauſe of his diſguiſe?

"The Danes," replied Mrs. Mills, "had uſurped his kingdom; he, therefore, uſed this ſtratagem to inform himſelf of their ſituation and deſigns."

"Pray, aunt," ſaid William, "was it

not Alfred who firſt divided England into counties?"

"It was," replied Mrs. Mills; "long wars had introduced ſuch diſorders into the kingdom, that vagrants every where abounded, who, having no ſettled place of abode, after committing all ſorts of outrages, by ſhifting their quarters, eaſily eluded juſtice. To prevent this, Alfred divided the whole iſland into counties, the counties into hundreds, and the hundreds into tythings. This done, every inhabitant was obliged to belong to ſome tything, otherwiſe he was conſidered as a vagabond, and the owner of the houſe where he lodged, in caſe of his eſcape, became reſponſible for any miſdemeanour he might commit."

"It was a very wiſe regulation," ſaid William; "Alfred was a great king!"

"He was not only a great king," replied Mrs. Mills, "but a good man: his character is the moſt perfect handed down to us by hiſtorians; eſpecially, if we conſider the obſcure age in which he lived: he protected

protected his country by arms, polished it by arts, and enacted many useful laws for the happiness and future welfare of his people. He was the fifth king of the Saxon line.

"That picture," said Mrs. Mills, pointing to one on her right hand, is a view of Gibraltar, which you know, William, was taken from the Spaniards by the English, in the reign of Queen-Ann, and was bravely defended by General Elliot (afterwards Lord Heathfield) in the last war.

"The next piece deserves your particular attention, not only from the masterly style in which it is executed, but from the useful lesson it contains. I need not, I dare say, tell either of you, that the principal figure represents Richard the Second, who, by his admirable presence of mind, preserved his own and the lives of his whole retinue."

"I am quite unacquainted with the story," said Clara.

"Have you not read the history of England?" rejoined Mrs. Mills.

"O yes, madam."

"It is aſtoniſhing then that you ſhould not call to mind a circumſtance ſo generally known, and in itſelf ſo remarkable: The reign of Richard the Second was diſturbed by many civil commotions, and among others by an inſurrection of the common people, on account of the poletax, headed by a blackſmith, known by the name of Wat Tyler. This rebellion became ſo formidable, that it was thought adviſeable to offer terms, which being repeatedly rejected by the mutineers, the king propoſed a conference with their leader, which took place accordingly in Smithfield; but, in this interview, the inſolence of Tyler, who brandiſhed his dagger with an air of authority, ſo incenſed Sir Thomas Walworth, mayor of London, that, ſuſpecting his deſign was to ſtab the king, he ſtunned him with a blow of his mace, and another of the king's retinue run him thro' the body. The rebels, ſeeing their leader fall, immediately prepared to revenge him, and bent their bows for this purpoſe; when the king, though at this time not

ſixteen years of age, rode up to them, and in a reſolute tone of voice: 'What, my friends,' ſaid he, 'will you then kill your king? be not concerned for the loſs of that traitor; I myſelf will be your leader: Follow me, and I will grant you all your reaſonable deſires.'

"The magnanimity of the young king ſtruck the multitude with ſuch awe, that they changed their firſt purpoſe, and, as if mechanically led, followed him into the fields, where they laid down their arms."

"What an aſtoniſhing inſtance of courage and preſence of mind!" ſaid Clara, "How ſurpriſing, that it ſhould not ſtrike me, when I read the hiſtory of England! but I ſuppoſe I was thinking of ſomething elſe."

"To be thinking of one thing and doing another," obſerved her aunt, "is the certain way to preclude improvement; and of all ignorance, none is ſo diſgraceful as that which relates to the hiſtory and geography of our own country."

" To ſay the truth, aunt, " replied Clara, " I always thought hiſtory very dry and unintereſting: When Miſs Smith, therefore, who was for ſome time my governeſs, uſed to oblige me to read it, I generally ſat down with an ill-will, and paid very little attention: but I certainly deprived myſelf of great *pleaſure*, as well as improvement; for I am convinced, from the entertainment you have given us, madam, this afternoon, that, had I attended to what I read, I ſhould neither have found hiſtory dry nor unintereſting:—but pray, madam, what is the ſubject of the oppoſite piece?"

" It is Regulus at the gates of Rome," replied Mrs. Mills: " you remember the ſtory, William?"

" Yes," replied William, " I have read it many times!"

" I am very ignorant," ſaid Clara, with a ſigh, " there has not been one, among all the ſtories you, madam, have mentioned with which I am the leaſt acquainted."

" Since time once paſt, my dear, cannot

not be recalled, let us," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "think only of improving the future: William, tell your ſiſter the ſtory of Regulus."

"My ſiſter," ſaid William, "would be more entertained to read it in Dr. Goldſmith's Roman Hiſtory: but I will relate it as well as I can:

"You muſt know, ſiſter, that Regulus was a great warrior: The Romans ſent him to fight againſt the Carthagenians; he overcame them in ſeveral battles, but was at laſt defeated and taken priſoner. After a long time, the Carthagenians wiſhed to make peace with the Romans; ſo they ſent Regulus with their ambaſſadors to Rome, thinking, as he had been a priſoner four years, he would perſuade his countrymen to put an end to the war, that he might be ſet free: but, before the Carthagenians let Regulus depart, they made him ſolemnly promiſe, in caſe the Romans did not agree to a peace, that he would return, and deliver himſelf up their priſoner.

" All the Romans were rejoiced when they heard that Regulus was returning to Rome: but he, with a ſettled melancholy, upon his arrival, refuſed to enter the gates, ſaying, that he was a ſlave to the Carthagenians, and unworthy the honours his country would beſtow on him. So he ſtayed without the gates; and when the Senate aſſembled there (as was uſual, to give audience to the Ambaſſadors) he made propoſals for a peace, as the Carthagenians had directed him. The Senate were very much inclined to accept them, and it remained only for Regulus, who had great influence with his countrymen, to give his opinion; which, to the ſurpriſe of every one, he did for a continuance of the war. The Senate, though convinced by his arguments, could not reſolve upon a meaſure that muſt end in the ruin of a man who had acted ſo nobly; but Regulus, fearing they might be biaſed by any perſonal concern for him, relieved their embarraſſment, by breaking off the treaty, and riſing to return with the ambaſſadors

to Carthage, which, in ſpite of the entreaties of the Senate and his deareſt friends, he did, though he well knew the tortures he ſhould undergo: but nothing would prevail upon him to break the promiſe he had given to the Carthagenians, who, I am ſorry to tell you, were ſo enraged, when they heard from their ambaſſadors that Regulus, inſtead of haſtening a peace, had given his voice for the continuance of the war, that for three days they tortured him in the moſt cruel manner, and at laſt left him to expire in a barrel ſtuck with ſpikes."

"What wretches they muſt have been," ſaid Clara, "to puniſh him for acting ſo nobly!"

"Their conduct," replied Mrs. Mills, "was indeed truly deſpicable; but of what enormities will not rancour and revenge render human nature capable!"

"Proſenna," ſaid William, "behaved very differently toward Mutius, upon a ſimilar occaſion. How generouſly he acted!"

"His conduct," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "was indeed very different—Your ſiſter, William, looks as if ſhe wiſhed to hear the anecdote. You can oblige her."

"If you pleaſe, ſiſter," ſaid William, "I will repeat to you an abridgement our uſher made of this ſtory; it was one of my taſks a few weeks before the holidays:

"When Tarquin the Proud was expelled Rome, he engaged in his intereſt Proſenna, one of the kings of Eturia, who laid ſiege to Rome, and reduced the inhabitants to the greateſt diſtreſs. Mutius, a youth of undaunted courage, reſolving to deliver his country from an enemy ſo oppreſſive, entered the camp of Proſenna, in the habit of an Etyrian peaſant, reſolved to aſſaſſinate the king, or to periſh in the attempt. With this reſolution, he made up to the place where Proſenna was paying his troops, with his ſecretary by his ſide; but miſtaking the latter for the king, ſtabbed him to the heart, and was immediately apprehended. When brought into the

the royal preſence, and aſked by Proſenna the cauſe of ſo heinous an action? Mutius informed him, without reſerve, of his country and deſign, and thurſting his hand into a fire that was burning upon an altar before him, held it there, and addreſſing Proſenna, with a ſtedfaſt countenance: 'You ſee,' ſaid he, 'how little I regard the ſevereſt puniſhment you can inflict; a Roman knows not only how to act, but how to ſuffer. Three hundred youths like me have conſpired your deſtruction.' Proſenna, poſſeſſed a mind too noble not to acknowledge merit, though found in an enemy; ſtruck with the courage and magnanimity of the young man, he ordered him to be ſafely conducted back to Rome, and offered the beſieged terms of peace, which, being neither hard nor diſgraceful, were readily accepted."

Clara thanked her brother for obliging her with the extract; and obſerved, in her turn, that the conduct of Proſenna formed a ſtriking contraſt to that of the Carthagenians: "How noble," ſaid ſhe, "to

forgive the young man who had attempted to kill him!"

"You ſee," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "that generoſity and clemency exalt a character as much as injuſtice and cruelty debaſe it. The generoſity of the Eturian king has handed his name down to poſterity with honour, while the depravity of the Carthagenians muſt ever reflect an indeliable ſtain on theirs; but, my dears, we have already exceeded the uſual hour for tea."

"For tea, madam!" exclaimed Clara, "is it ſix o'clock?"

"It is full half after," replied Mrs. Mills, looking at her watch.

"Well," ſaid Clara, "I am aſtoniſhed! is it poſſible that we have been here three hours?"

"Time, my dear Clara," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "ſeems long only to thoſe who know not how to improve it."

They now left the gallery, and tea immediately followed. In the courſe of their evening walk, Mrs. Mills called upon ſeveral poor villagers, who, from various cauſes,

cauſes, ſtood in need of her aſſiſtance, and ſhe was much pleaſed to obſerve, that neither Clara nor her brother were inſenſible to the pleaſure of conferring happineſs; their purſes were immediately in their hand, and they beſtowed with a kindneſs and modeſty that very much enhanced the gift.

As they returned, Mrs. Mills told them that ſhe had an excurſion in contemplation for the next morning: "About three miles from hence," ſaid ſhe, "is a very fine aviary; the gentleman to whom it belongs is now in London, but we can ſee the birds, which I think will afford you entertainment."

The young folk were extremely pleaſed, and having completed their walk, retired to reſt, fully occupied with the thought of the pleaſure they were to enjoy the next day. But a diſappointment awaited them; a continued rain put a ſtop to the jaunt. Clara, who, though much improved by the converſation of her aunt, had not yet acquired philoſophy to bear a diſappointment

ment without murmuring, began to be a little out of humour: ſhe concealed it as much as poſſible from her aunt, whoſe good opinion ſhe was very ambitious to attain, but could not forbear thinking they ſhould paſs a very dull day, and, during breakfaſt, was ſo intent upon watching the clouds, that ſhe could ſcarcely attend to any thing that paſſed, till Mrs. Mills, having obſerved how neceſſary it was to accuſtom ourſelves to bear diſappointment, added, that though the weather for the preſent had put a ſtop to their intended expedition, ſhe doubted not, as her young pupils ſeem pleaſed with the contemplation of nature, that ſhe could ſupply them with amuſement equally agreeable. Clara and William, who wiſhed much to have ſeen the aviary, were unwilling to believe this, till Mrs. Mills, taking them into her dreſſing room, opened an Indian cabinet, in which was a large collection of the moſt beautiful ſhells, arranged in exact order, according to their ſeveral claſſes. This was indeed an agreeable ſurpriſe!

The

The young folk no longer regretted the aviary, but thought their aunt had ſupplied them with amuſement, if not for the whole day, at leaſt for a conſiderable part of it. Mrs. Mills, as uſual, heightened their entertainment by a variety of curious particulars, which ſhe gave them of the little tribe that had once occupied the ſhells. They were particularly attentive to the account of the purple-fiſh, which ſhe told them had upon its back a little folded tunicle or bag, containing a white liquor, which dyed wool of a deep and unfading purple, and was ſuppoſed to be the ſame uſed by the ancients for their purple dye; but ſhe added, that the quantity of this liquor in each fiſh was ſo very ſmall, that an immenſe number were neceſſary to dye one piece of ſtuff, which cauſed the ancients to ſet a very high value on their Tyrian dye, ſo called, probably, from its being firſt diſcovered or uſed by the people of Tyre.

Clara and her brother were alſo much entertained with the account ſhe gave them

of

of the naker, or mother of pearl, and with her deſcription of the manner in which the negroes dive, to furniſh us with the pearls contained in the body and beautiful ſhell of the fiſh.

This cabinet having for ſome time furniſhed entertainment, Mrs. Mills unlocked the folding door of another, which ſtood in a niche oppoſite, and contained a miſcellaneous collection of natural curioſities. Clara's eye ſoon fixed on an American humming bird, which, though dried, preſerved a great ſhare of its natural beauty. She took it from the cabinet with wonder, admired the luſtre of its plumage, and above all its ſize, which did not greatly exceed that of a humble bee.

"Dear," ſaid ſhe, "what a beautiful little creature! though ſo ſmall, the feathers, wings, talons, every part of it is as perfect as thoſe of the largeſt birds: how I ſhould like to ſee one alive!

"In America," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "humming birds of various ſorts are conſtantly ſeen fluttering about the flowers, from whence

whence they extract the honey that ſupports them. The motion of their wings is ſo rapid, that it produces a humming ſound, from which their name is derived."

"I thought," ſaid William, "it was impoſſible they could feed upon ſeed and berries, as other birds do, the beak is ſo ſmall; it is not larger than a fine needle!"

"Small as it is," rejoined Mrs. Mills, "it renders them very formidable to larger birds, and eſpecially to one called the gooſbec, which attempts to ſurpriſe the young humming birds in the neſt, but flies off on the appearance of the mother, who purſues the invader cloſe, and faſtening her little talons under his wing, pierces him with her pointed beak, till ſhe has entirely diſabled him. Here is the neſt of the humming bird; have you examined it."

"Well," ſaid William, "this is indeed a neſt in minature! and, as I live! two little eggs, not bigger than a ſmall pea!"

"How

"How ſmall," ſaid Clara, "the pretty creatures muſt be when they are firſt hatched!"

"They are ſaid to be about the ſize of a large blue fly," replied Mrs. Mills.

"Well" ſaid William, "it would be worth taking a voyage to America to ſee a humming bird."

"And pray," rejoined his aunt, "what do you think of a trip to the coaſt of Guinea, where deer are ſaid to be found no bigger than kittens!"

"Is that true?"

"Here is the leg of one," reſumed his aunt; "it is a common article in the cabinets of the curious: nay, I have ſeen them made into tobacco ſtoppers."

"Dear," ſaid Clara, "how ſmall! How I ſhould like to have a Guinea deer and an American humming bird!"

"And ſo ſhould I," ſaid William; "but pray, madam," continued he, "what is this? to judge from its appearance, it ſhould ſeem unworthy a place among ſo many rarities.—It is ſo dried

and

and ſhrivelled, it is impoſſible to ſay what is the form or colour."

"It is," replied Mrs. Milks, "a leaf of the Papyrus, a large plant which grows wild in Egypt amidſt the ſtagnate waters, after the inundations of the Nile. The Egyptians and Romans formerly uſed a part of this plant for the purpoſes we do paper. The intermediate part of the ſtalk was cut and ſeparated into different plates or laminae, which were laid together upon a ſmooth board, ſo as to form ſheets. They were then moiſtened with water, which diſſolved a kind of glew that was in the pores, which ſerved as a cement. The ſheets thus formed were dried, preſſed, and kept for uſe. The Romans afterwards invented methods to bring it to further perfection. They beat it with hammers, to render it thin and leſs porous, poliſhed it with ivory, and, by a ſort of calendar, gave it a ſhining gloſs.—It is from this plant that the paper of our day takes its name. The Egyptians, alſo, uſed the roots for firing,

firing, and many other purpoſes; built little boats of the plant itſelf, and formed the inner bark into ſails, mats, garments, coverlids, and cordage; they alſo chewed it, and ſwallowed the juice as a great dainty. You ſee, therefore, William that the intrinſic worth of this plant gives it a juſt title to obſervation."

"It certainly does, aunt," ſaid William, "I ſee it is not right to truſt always to appearances; but what is this! bleſs me, 'tis a ſtone tree!"

"It has that appearance," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "it is a petrifaction. Certain ſprings abound with ſparry particles, which being, by time, inſinuated into the pores of the ſubſtance put into them, ſuppoſe, for example, a vegetable, as in the inſtance before us, form a cruſt round it, which gives it, as you ſee, the appearance of ſtone."

"I have heard," ſaid, William, "of theſe petrifying waters, but always underſtood they actually changed the things that were put into them to ſtone."

"No,"

"No," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "that is a miſtake, the vegetable undergoes no alteration; the ſtony particles of the ſpring, only, by adhering to it, in the manner I have told you, acquires the exact form, while the vegetable it has encloſed decays."

"Theſe petrifying waters," ſaid Clara, "are, I ſuppoſe, very dangerous to drink."

"I am not," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "ſufficiently acquainted with their phyſical property to tell you, whether or not they be wholeſome. But as no petrifaction can happen in a vegetable, where there is a circulation of the juices, it follows, I apprehend, that no immediate bad effect, can occur from the drinking ſuch waters, the blood being in conſtant circulation throughout our body."

"Here is another petrifaction," ſaid Clara, "taking up a little ſtony branch, but it is different from the other."

"That," ſaid Mrs. Mills, is coral, which is now aſcertained to be a regular vegetation,

tion, though once thought by many learned men to be nothing more than a petrified ſubſtance. It grows with the top downwards, in little caverns, or the jutting out of rocks, at the bottom of the ſea. On the branches are ſmall tumours, containing a ſort of milk, and pinked in the form of ſtars, from whence little flowers have been obſerved to ſhoot, but they withdraw upon being expoſed any time to the air. This is the mandrepore, another ſtony ſea plant.

"It is in the form, you ſee, of a little tree, the branches of which are ſtudded with ſeveral holes; but there are different ſorts of the mandrepore."

Mrs. Mills here ceaſed—and looking at her watch, roſe and ſhut the cabinet.

The young folks thanked her for their entertainment, and were retiring, when Clara ſtopped to examine a fine piece of embroidery that hung over the chimney.

"That piece," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "is the work of my god-daughter, Miſs Elinor Reeves: I am indebted to her kindneſs

kindneſs and ingenuity for moſt of the pieces that furniſh this room; if I am not miſtaken, you are no ſtrangers to each other."

Clara replied, "that ſhe had ſeveral times been in company with Miſs Reeves."

"Then," rejoined Mrs. Mills, "I am ſure you will look with pleaſure upon theſe little eſſays of her ſkill; for I will venture to affirm, no one can know my dear Elinor without loving her. Her diſpoſition is truly amiable."

Clara made no reply; accuſtomed from her infancy to flattery, the praiſes of another were never welcome to her ear: wiſhing, therefore, to change the converſation, ſhe turned to a landſcape that hung on the oppoſite ſide of the room; and having enquired from what part of Europe the view was taken, obſerved, that it was a very fine engraving."

"An engraving!" ſaid Mrs. Mills, "upon my word, you pay Elinor a great compliment; 'tis executed with the needle."

Clara

Clara was diſappointed—ſhe was vexed ſhe had taken notice of the piece, and was again ſilent.

"I am not a judge of needle work," ſaid William, "but I think that fruit (pointing to a piece of embroidery that hung near) is very natural. Do not you, ſiſter?"

"Yes," ſaid Clara, "it is not amiſs; but, in theſe things, the praiſe is rather due to the perſon who deſigned, than the perſon who worked the piece. The effect does not altogether depend upon the needle."

"Very true," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "the needle cannot make a bad deſign, a perfect picture, but it can add great beauty to a good one; and with reſpect to theſe before us, their chief beauty is derived from the needle: obſerve thoſe cherries and that peach, how admirably the colours are ſoftened one into another—with what judgement the ſhaddows are thrown—one could almoſt fancy it poſſible to take them from the baſket. This is reckoned one of

Elinor's

Elinor's moſt capital performance, and you muſt allow it excellent."

"O!" returned Clara, "I do not ſay, it has not merit, but your partiality, aunt, (excuſe me) makes you blind to the imperfections.—Now I think, had more colour been thrown into the peach, the effect had been better—and are not the ſtalks of the cherries a trifle too long?"

Mrs. Mills beheld with concern the envy that gave riſe to theſe obſervations. "Well, my dear," ſaid ſhe, "if you will not allow your friend merit, as an artiſt, you muſt confeſs that her diſpoſition is truly amiable."

"Why," ſaid Clara, "ſhe may be very amiable, but I own, I do not think her quite ſo faultleſs as you ſeem to decribe."—"But, Madam," (continued ſhe, wiſhing to put an end to a converſation from which ſhe experienced ſo little pleaſure,) "is it not time to dreſs for dinner?"

"I will detain you no longer, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Mills, eſpecially as I

 have

have a little ſearch to make for a manuſcript, which it has juſt now occurred to me, will furniſh entertainment for the afternoon."

"How good you are, Madam," ſaid Clara, "you are always thinking of us. Then obſerving that William had left the room, ſhe ſet off in purſuit of him to communicate the agreeable news."

William was rejoiced, and after dinner, when the cloth was removed, liſtened, as did alſo his ſiſter, with the utmoſt attention, to

THE

EXPLANATION,

A

TALE.

"Charlotte Graves, and Maria Wilmot, were nearly of the ſame age: Their parents were intimate friends, and near neighbours, which cauſing the children to be much together, ſtrengthened the affection, which, in the tender years of infancy, exiſted

exiſted between them; but this friendly intercourſe was early interrupted; the declining ſtate of Mrs. Wilmot's health rendering it neceſſary ſhe ſhould breathe her native air. Mr. Wilmot purchaſed an eſtate in Wales, to which he ſhortly after retired with his family. Maria was at this time eight years of age, and her friend Charlotte juſt twelve months younger. The little girls ſhed many tears at parting, promiſed to love each other always, and as they had both been for ſome time in joining-hand, to write to each other often.

"The year after the retirement of Mr. Wilmot, Charlotte had the misfortune to loſe her mother, who died ſuddenly, and a perſon from France was engaged to ſuperintend her education. Had this lady been worthy the truſt repoſed in her, all had been well; but, unfortunately, no one more improper could poſſibly have been choſen. Her manners were indeed poliſhed; her addreſs was inſinuating, but ſhe was wholly without principle or ſenti-

ment: beauty, ſplendor and riches, were, in her eſtimation, the chief bleſſings of life, and if ſhe had a view beyond her own intereſt, which ſhe endeavoured to promote, by flattering her follies, it was to poliſh the manners of her pupil, rather than to cultivate her underſtanding or to form her heart.

"At the early age of nine, with a mind little turned to reflection, it is not ſurpriſing that harClotte ſhould imbibe the follies and prejudices of her governante; ſhe readily believed, that providence, in giving her beauty, had beſtowed on her its choiceſt bleſſing; and while ſhe ſpared no attention to embelliſh her perſon, ſuffered her underſtanding to lie wholly neglected. Vain, frivolous, fond of admiration, her follies, by indulgence, ſwelled into vices; among which, envy and detraction were not the leaſt conſpicuous: her heart ſickened at perfection in another, and her tongue was ever ready to depreciate the excellence ſhe could not attain.

"Maria,

"Maria, in the mean while, was rapidly improving in every amiable virtue and elegant accompliſhment. She, too, had loſt her mother, but the kind attention of her father, who dedicated the chief of his time to her improvement, and the tenderneſs of a maiden aunt, who reſided with them, ſoftened the ſeverity of her misfortune: ſhe already perfectly underſtood three languages, was miſtreſs of geography, played incomparably on the pedal harp, and diſcovered a great taſte for painting; but theſe accompliſhments, though joined to a handſome perſon, conſtituted but a ſmall part of her perfections. Her piety, her reſpectful affection to her father and aunt, her ſweetneſs of temper, her gentleneſs, her humility, added a ſuperior luſtre to her character; every one loved, every one admired, every one eſteemed her. Her accompliſhments and virtues, at length, reached the ear of her friend Charlotte, who, at firſt paid little attention to what ſhe heard; but when two or three families, who had made excurſions into the

part of the country where Mr. Wilmot lived, thinking to give her pleaſure, was laviſh in the commendations of her old friend, ſhe felt a pang that ſhe with difficulty concealed, and from this moment ſuch are the baleful effects of envy, experienced a decline in the affection ſhe had, till now, entertained for Maria.

" During five years that had elapſed, ſince their ſeparation, letters had conſtantly paſt between them, but the correſpondence on the part of Charlotte now became leſs pleaſing: The moſt affectionate epiſtles lie by unanſwered for months, and at laſt excited only a formal apology; this was by degrees omitted, and in the end the correſpondence ceaſed.

" Among Mr. Graves's friends was an old Baronet, remarkable for his cheerfulneſs and good-humour; though upwards of ſeventy, he was always the firſt to promote a party of pleaſure for the young folk, and had for ſome time promiſed to give them a ball. The day was at laſt fixed, and all his young friends invited.

vited. Charlotte, among the reſt, was not a little pleaſed, to receive a card of invitation; ſhe immediately flew to conſult with her governeſs upon what dreſs ſhe ſhould appear in, being determined, ſhe ſaid, not to be outdone by any in the ball room. Mademoiſelle applauded her reſolution, and tapping her on the cheek," ſaid, "it would be a ſhame, if, with that pretty face, ſhe did not outſhine every one there." The important matter was then entered upon, and ſupplied converſation till the happy day arrived; when, with all the advantages an expenſive dreſs could give to a perſon really handſome, though ſpoilt by affectation and ſelf-ſufficiency, ſhe entered the ball-room, where a croud of young folk, with happy countenances, were aſſembled.

"The minuets being over, and country dances propoſed, a young lady of the moſt engaging aſpect was preſented by Sir William (for ſo the gentleman who gave the entertainment was called) to Charlotte for a partner. They went down ſeveral dances, to their mutual ſatisfaction, when

Charlotte, underſtanding that her partner was a little indiſpoſed with the head-ache, propoſed that they ſhould deſiſt. This the young lady refuſed, till repeatedly aſſured it would be equally agreeable to her companion, when ſhe conſented, and they ſat down.

"What delightful dancers," obſerved Miſs Shirley, for that was the name of Charlotte's partner, "are thoſe two young ladies! It is impoſſible to imagine any thing more graceful than their movements; I have not been able to keep my eyes off them the whole evening."

"Whether you think them fine dancers or not," replied Charlotte, "I will anſwer for it they think themſelves ſo."

"There is nothing," returned the young lady, "aſſuming in their deportment; they appear to be perfectly modeſt and unaffected."

"Pſha," ſaid Charlotte, "it is eaſy to put on an air of modeſty; but I have known them long, and could always, through that,

diſcover

diſcover a great deal of arrogance and ſelf-conceit."

"We ſhould endeavour to judge favourably of every one," ſaid Miſs Shirley; perhaps you wrong them?"

"No," replied Charlotte; "I am ſeldom deceived in my opinion. They are twins; pray, do you think them handſome?"

"Yes," replied Miſs Shirley, "eſpecially ſhe in the white luteſtring; her eyes are beautiful."

"Why, yes," rejoined Charlotte, "her eyes are certainly fine; but do you not think there is a little of the vixen in them? I have always obſerved, that where there is ſo much fine, the temper is turbulent."

"It is illiberal," returned Miſs Shirley, "to form your opinion upon ſuch proof; how often do we find an amiable diſpoſition concealed under the moſt irregular features, and the reverſe where the countenance promiſes every thing amiable?"

"Your argument," replied Charlotte,

" may hold good in ſome caſes; but, depend upon it, Mary Danvers is a vixen."

" You are very ſevere," ſaid Miſs Shirley; " but pray, do you not think the young lady, who ſtands next, very handſome?"

" Yes," ſaid Charlotte, " if we give her credit for the white and red of her complexion."

" What do you mean?" ſaid Miſs Shirley.

" You know," replied Charlotte, " there is ſuch a thing as rouge and white paint."

" I have heard ſo," returned the young lady.

" I have been told," ſaid Charlotte, " that Miſs Fairfax ſometimes pays a viſit to her mamma's paint boxes."

" And can you believe it?" ſaid Miſs Shirley. " How abſurd to ſuppoſe a girl of thirteen or fourteen (I am ſure ſhe does not appear to be older) would paint, or that her parents would permit her."

" Such things," returned Charlotte, " do however happen: Why now, perhaps, you think

think the flaxen ringlets of her partner pure nature."

"They appear to be ſo," ſaid Miſs Shirley.

"Ah," ſaid Charlotte, "appearances are often deceitful."

"You are very ſatirical," ſaid Miſs Shirley; "but here comes one in whom I think you muſt allow beauty of perſon and good ſenſe to unite.

"Do you mean Lady Eliza Elwin?"

"The ſame," ſaid Miſs Shirley; "you muſt confeſs that ſhe is very amiable and accompliſhed, and as to beauty of perſon few can, I think, exceed her."

"Why, Lady Eliza," returned Charlotte, "is certainly affable; her converſation too is what the world terms agreeable; though, in my opinion, not without a tincture of the female pedant, which you muſt allow is horrid; but, as to her features, though regular, they want animation. You'll laugh when I ſay, I never look on Lady Eliza without thinking of a pretty wax doll, with cherry cheeks and

glaſs eyes——Speaking of eyes; pray, do you really think Lady Eliza's ſo fine? For my own part, I am not fond of thoſe ſleepy downcaſt eyes; I always ſuſpect that ſomething more is concealed under them than people are aware of. Between you and I, I have heard it whiſpered, that Lady Eliza, with all that ſoftneſs, is not the beſt tempered; but ſome people take a malicious pleaſure in ſcandalizing their neighbours."

"Who," ſaid Miſs Shirley, "may hope to eſcape, if Lady Eliza is cenſured ſo unjuſtly! She laſt year paſſed ſome weeks in Radnorſhire; I had, therefore, frequent opportunities of meeting her, and, aſſure you, I found her a moſt amiable accompliſhed young lady; and as to her temper, I have been told by her moſt intimate friends, that few can boaſt one more equal."

"I ſee," returned Charlotte, "that ſhe is a favourite of yours—we will, therefore, change the ſubject. Pray, did not you mention

mention Radnorſhire? Do you reſide in that part of Wales?"

Miſs Shirley replied, that ſhe did; and added, it was ſcarcely a week ſince ſhe left it.

"You are then acquainted, perhaps," returned Charlotte, "with Miſs Wilmot?"

"Miſs Wilmot!" exclaimed the other, "I am——"

"O, you are intimate," interrupted Charlotte; "I am rejoiced! I ſhall be glad to aſk a few queſtions about her—Pray, is it true that ſhe is ſo very accompliſhed, and ſo very handſome?"

"I am an improper perſon," replied Miſs Shirley, "to give you information upon this point; for——"

"Nay," interrupted Charlotte, who loved the ſound of her own voice better than that of any one's elſe, "ſince you are acquainted, I could not have aſked one more proper. I ſee ſhe is not ſo great a favourite as Lady Eliza; but no matter, you have, I dare ſay, your reaſons; one cannot, you know, be wholly blind to the

the faults of one's friends: in truth, we have all faults; ſome of one kind, and ſome of another, though none is, to be ſure, worſe than a covetous temper."

"Do you mean," ſaid Miſs Shirley, "that Maria Wilmot is covetous?"

"Somewhat that way inclined," returned Charlotte;" "but, as I obſerved before, we have all our faults."

"But, my dear Miſs," ſaid Charlotte's partner, "with earneſtneſs, tell me, have you reaſon for entertaining ſuch an opinion? Surely, no heart, that is not loſt to every noble ſentiment, can harbour ſo deſpicable a vice as covetouſneſs."

"Why, one would think ſo," returned Charlotte; but it is I believe too true, that covetouſneſs is poor Maria Wilmot's failing; what is your opinion?"

"I never thought it ſo," replied Miſs Shirley; "but 'tis poſſible I may be blinded by partiality."

"Depend upon it," replied Charlotte, "you are; I could give you twenty inſtances of her ſtingineſs: Would you believe

lieve it, ſhe has never had a cap nor a mantua made in London ſince her father retired into Wales! Now, as to taſte, I have been told ſhe has a great deal; therefore it can only proceed from her ſtingy diſpóſition."

"But ſhe is at preſent young," returned Miſs Shirley, "and it is poſſible may not conduct theſe matters herſelf."

"O, I beg your pardon," returned Charlotte, "her father is ſo extravagantly fond of her, that he does not contradict her in any thing, and, I have been credibly informed, ſuffers her to draw on him for any money ſhe pleaſes."

"If that be the caſe," returned Miſs Shirley, "it behoves her to be cautious of abuſing the confidence he is ſo generous as to repoſe in her."

"I dare ſay, ſhe does not think of that," ſaid Charlotte: "no; I am perſuaded ſhe is mean. I will give you another inſtance of her covetous temper; I ſeldom aſſert any thing but upon pretty clear proof: Laſt year, ſhe accompanied her aunt, who

you

you know, poor old ſoul, is troubled with the gout, to Bath: Well, would you believe it, I was credibly aſſured, by a friend of mine who was there at the time, that ſhe never, during the whole ſeaſon, once put into a raffle nor touched a card!"

"I have been told," replied Miſs Shirley, "that cards, and alſo raffling, as being a ſpecies of gaming, were two things to which her mamma had a particular objection."

"But her mother has been dead theſe three years," replied the ungenerous Charlotte, "it is, therefore, very unlikely ſhe would be ſo ſcrupulous on that account: No, no, depend upon it, ſhe does not love to part with money. I'll tell you another anecdote I heard, upon authority equally as good, which proves her meanneſs beyond all diſpute. Would you believe, that, before a whole room-full of company, ſhe refuſed to ſubſcribe to a concert, at which Mara ſung! I declare I would not have let myſelf down ſo, had it been the laſt five guineas I had in the world;

world, and what makes it worſe, it ſeems ſhe pretends to be fond of muſic, and, they ſay, plays finely on the harp; not that I believe every thing of this ſort that I hear, for all who pretend to give their opinion are not judges of good playing. In ſhort, you ſee ſhe is naturally covetous and mean."

"I hope," ſaid Miſs Shirley, "you do her injuſtice; but, if ſhe be really ſo, it would be kind to point out this as a part of her character, ſtanding in need of amendment."

"It would be a glorious taſk," ſaid Charlotte, "to ſet about reforming the world. Why now, Maria Wilmot and I have from our intimacy been friends, and till within theſe laſt two years correſpondents; but I——"

Miſs Shirley looked aſtoniſhed—"Is it poſſible," ſaid ſhe, "that you can be Miſs Graves, the friend and correſpondent of Maria Wilmot?"

"The very ſame," returned Charlotte; "but you ſeem ſurprized."

"I,"

"I," ſaid Miſs Shirley, "am really Maria Wilmot, your old friend and correſpondent. My father has changed his name, on account of an eſtate that has been left him on that condition, which is the reaſon I am called Shirley. I was told you were upon a viſit in the country; I had, therefore, till now, not the ſlighteſt idea that I was converſing with my old friend."

"Let the reader imagine what was the confuſion of Charlotte, who had been unjuſtly ſtigmatizing her friend with ſo deſpicable a vice! She ſeemed rooted to the place where ſhe ſtood, incapable of articulating a word either to vindicate or excuſe her conduct.

"Miſs Shirley pitied and wiſhed to relieve her embarraſſment; but at this momoment Sir William, accompanied by her father and Mr. Graves, who had juſt entered, came up to them. They ſoon underſtood that an explanation had taken place between the young ladies, and told them, that having a mind to heighten the

pleaſure

pleaſure of their meeting, after ſo long an abſence, by the ſurpriſe, they had purpoſely introduced them to each other as ſtrangers, and did not intend that the ecclairciſſement ſhould have taken place, till they were all aſſembled at ſupper: "but," continued Mr. Graves, in a jocular ſtrain, "I find there is no poſſibility of keeping a ſecret where girls are concerned: you were determined to be beforehand with us."

"Charlotte was too much chagrined to reliſh the jeſt: her cheerfulneſs was fled for the remainder of the evening, during which her behaviour appeared aukward and conſtrained. She wiſhed to apologize to Miſs Shirley for the improper licence ſhe had given her tongue; but what could ſhe ſay? what excuſe could ſhe frame for an attack on her character, ſo unjuſt and unprovoked? She attempted more than once to enter upon the ſubject; but her voice faltered—ſhe knew not where to begin, and at length, having for ſome hours laboured under the moſt uneaſy ſenſations,

ſhe

ſhe returned home full of ſhame and vexation. When retired to her chamber, ſhe had leiſure to reflect coolly on the occurrences of the evening, and could not but admire the conduct of Maria, who, during the whole courſe of it, had generouſly endeavoured, by every kind and polite attention, to diſſipate her chagrin, and convince her ſhe harboured no reſentment on account of the paſt. "Maria," ſaid Charlotte, "is certainly very generous; how unfortunate that I ſhould not know her! If I had, this would not have happened; I ſhall in future be very cautious to whom I expreſs my ſentiments.—Let me reflect.—What was it I did ſay?—O, that ſhe was covetous—Well, there is no great crime in that; becauſe it is very likely to be true: but then, as ſhe was my old friend, I ſhould not have pointed out her faults to another, and eſpecially to one who appeared to be a ſtranger to me. I am perſuaded ſhe is ſtingy; but let her be what ſhe will, ſhe has certainly behaved to me this evening like an angel: how ſhe might have

have mortified and expoſed me to every body! I am ſure, had I been in her place, and ſhe in mine, I ſhould have taken all the revenge I could. I wiſh I had made ſome apology—I have a great inclination to go to morrow morning, and tell her I am ſorry for what I ſaid. I never did make conceſſions to any one before: but ſomehow I am uneaſy; I don't know what poſſeſſes me: I am half-inclined to love her—I wiſh I had not heard ſo much about her beauty and accompliſhments: it is a ſad thing to be envious!"

"Fortunately for Charlotte, Madamoiſelle had for ſome time left the family, and was gone to reſide with a relation in France: thoſe good impreſſions, therefore, which Charlotte had in her infancy imbibed, from the precepts and example of an amiable mother, and which, though ſtifled by flattery and ill advice, were not eradicated, had time to operate. She roſe early in the morning, and prompt by a natural impetuoſity, which hurried on every

impulſe

impulſe of her mind, whether it was to good or bad, ſhe ſet off, attended only by her maid, to Mr. Shirley's.

" Maria happening this morning to riſe latter than uſual, on account of a ſlight indiſpoſition, had not left her chamber: Charlotte, therefore, on her arrival, was ſhewn into her friends dreſſing room, when ſhe waited half an hour.

" Though not very ſtudious, the ſubject of her preſent viſit afforded ſuch diſagreeable reflections, that for once, in her life, ſhe caſt her eyes around, in purſuit of a book: not finding one to her purpoſe, ſhe ſo far infringed the rules of good-breeding, as to open a drawer, the key of which was turned, and in it found a ladies memorandum book: nothing could have ſuited her taſte better; ſhe unclaſped it, with an intent to peruſe the ſongs and enigma's, but in turning over the leaves for this purpoſe, ſome memorandums in the hand-writing of Maria caught her eye, and I am ſorry to ſay, ſhe was ſo indelicate

delicate to peruſe, among many other of the ſame kind, the following:

" Paid the ſchool miſtreſs, half a-year, for John Gilies's two children, - l. 1 s. 1 d. 0

For Mary Duff's boy and girl, - 1 1 0

For Ralph Field's youngeſt girl, - 0 10 6

Books, ſhirts, ſhifts, and ſhoes for the above children, 2 2 0

Dame Ruſſel, againſt her lying in, - 0 10 6

My mite toward promoting the Sunday ſchools, - 1 1 0

" Reſolved to new trim my white luteſtring, inſtead of buying a new dreſs for the aſſembly.

" *Note*—The money ſaved to go toward replacing poor John Mils's cow, dead laſt week."

Thoug

Though Charlotte had ſuffered envy and many other vices to predominate in her character, ſhe could not withhold the approbation due to the benevolence that ſhone through theſe ſimple memorandums: ſhe bluſhed at the thought of her own injuſtice, which had aſcribed to avarice an œconomy, which evidently appeared to proceed from the moſt generous of motives: Vanity had hitherto been a leading feature in her character, but when, in every inſtance, ſhe compared her own conduct with that of her friend, ſhe could not but feel her inferiority. Abſorbed in thought, ſometimes looking on the memorandums, and ſometimes reflecting on the ſtriking contraſt they formed to her own, ſhe continued with the book in her hand, till the entrance of Miſs Shirley recalled her to a ſenſe of the impropriety of her ſituation, and revived in her mind all the circumſtances for which ſhe came to apologize.

" Maria received her with a look full of complacency and kindneſs, and thanked

ed her for ſo early a mark of her attention.

" Charlotte was again embarraſſed; again at a loſs when to begin: at length, " ah, my dear Miſs Shirley," ſaid ſhe, " if you wiſh to reconcile me to myſelf, be leſs kind, and leſs generous, for how, otherwiſe, can I forgive myſelf the injury I did you laſt night?"

" Think no more of it," my dear, ſaid Maria, " my own conduct, in the inſtance to which you allude, was by no means free from blame, I certainly poſſeſſed myſelf of your ſentiments, by means that were very unjuſtifiable: I ſhould not have ſuffered you to remain in an error I could ſo eaſily have rectified: but I own, the deſire of knowing upon what grounds you accuſed me of a vice my ſoul deteſted, induced me to take an advantage which I am ſenſible was ungenerous: let us, therefore, ſince we are perhaps neither of us free from blame, mutually forgive each other."

"You are very generous," ſaid Charlotte, "but *my* conduct was unpardonable."

"Think no more of it," ſaid Maria, "perhaps you thought you had reaſon for what you ſaid; but time will, I hope, juſtify me in your opinion."

"O, my dear Miſs Shirley, my dear Maria," ſaid Charlotte, "this (pointing to the memorandum book) proves you to be every thing that is great and amiable: yet, even your juſtification covers me with ſhame, how mean muſt I appear in thus indelicately ſatisfying my curioſity!"

"A modeſt bluſh animated the blooming features of Maria, when ſhe underſtood, that memorandums, which were deſigned for her own peruſal, had been expoſed to the view of another. Both, though from different motives, appeared confuſed—and a ſilence of ſome moments enſued: it was at length broken by Maria: "Your curioſity, my dear," ſaid ſhe, taking Charlotte by the hand, "is its

own

own puniſhment, ſince my pocket-book contained ſo little to gratify it. With reſpect to myſelf, I am ſorry the peruſal of a few inſignificant memorandums ſhould expoſe to me to encomiums of which I am ſo wholly undeſerving."

"I ſincerely," ſaid Charlotte, "aſk your pardon for my indelicacy; but I cannot, in this inſtance, repent it. The peruſal of your memorandums, my dear, has taught me a leſſon, which, I hope, will be of ſervice to me throughout my whole life. O, Maria, what money have I not laviſhed in dreſs, trinkets, cards, and I know not how many frivolous things of the ſame kind, yet, at this moment, cannot call to mind one ſingle action capable of affording me a pleaſing reflection!"

"Perhaps," ſaid the gentle Maria, "you examine your actions with too great ſeverity; my poor mamma uſed often to obſerve, that we all owe ſomething to the world, and to the character we ſupport in it: The large ſums, ſhe would ſay, daily expended on the table, wardrobe,

wardrobe, and numerous retinue of a perſon of faſhon, would, it muſt be owned, more than decently ſupport many worthy indigent families, yet theſe, in the preſent ſtate of the world, are conſidered as the neceſſary appendagesof a high ſtation, nor are they, when proportioned to the fortune of the individual, at all hurtful to ſociety; they are, on the contrary, beneficial, as they furniſh the means of ſubſiſtance to the ſubordinate ranks of mankind."

"How kind!" ſaid Charlotte, "to recollect this obſervation of your mamma, to apologize for my extravagance!"

"Yet you," my dear Maria, "are conſtantly, I ſee, depriving yourſelf of pleaſures that you may diſtribute comforts to others."

"You are miſtaken," ſaid Maria, "I ſometimes give up a leſſer pleaſure to enjoy a greater, that is all."

"Do you then," ſaid Charlotte, "ſet no value on dreſs, and a thouſand other enjoyments, the money you appropriate to others, would purchaſe?"

to

"Such low and frivolous enjoyments," ſaid Maria, "acquire all their value from our ignorance of higher; when once we have taſted the pleaſures that ſpring from acts of kindneſs and benevolence, be aſſured, my dear Charlotte, all other muſt fail in the compariſon."

"How few girls of our age," ſaid Charlotte, "are there who think like you! yet how amiable do you appear! till compared with yours, I never ſaw the deformity of my own conduct; I thought, if indeed I thought at all, that it was irreproachable; but you have undeceived me."

"You aſcribe to me, my dear," ſaid Maria, "much more merit than I deſerve; with reſpect to you and I, all that can be ſaid, is, that we differ in our ideas of pleaſure; *you* have, perhaps, been told, that it is to be found in company and public amuſements, and I was early taught to ſeek it in retirement, books, the

ſociety

ſociety of ſelect friends, and eſpecially in contributing to the happineſs of others."

"I too," ſaid Charlotte, "will from this moment ceaſe to look for it elſewhere; you, my dear Maria, ſhall be the model by which I will endeavour to form my future conduct."

"You have choſen one very imperfect," ſaid the modeſt Maria.

"Ah!" ſaid Charlotte, "what would I not attempt to regain your eſteem and affection; I once poſſeſſed it, but the ill return I have long ſince made to your kindneſs, and above all the recollection of my conduct laſt night, muſt, in ſpight of your generoſity, cauſe you ever to deſpiſe me."

"Do not," replied Maria, "wrong me or yourſelf by ſuch a ſuppoſition: I ſhould, I own, be guilty of great inſincerity, were I to pretend, that my ſentiments in this reſpect, were the ſame laſt night, as they are at preſent: No, my friend; though willing to frame excuſes for a failing into which I was ſenſible,

I migh

I might myſelf have fallen, had it not been for the admonitions of a watchful mother, and, after her death, to thoſe of a father, who has made it the ſtudy of his life to form my heart and cultivate my underſtanding, yet, my dear Charlotte, pardon my freedom, when I found with what pleaſure you pointed out blemiſhes in, and heard you indiſcriminately aſperſe the moſt faultleſs characters, I own I felt an indignation and diſguſt, of which I thought myſelf incapable; but your candour, in thus frankly acknowledging your errors, muſt ſurely efface the remembrance of them, and entitle you to the eſteem of generous minds."

"You, my dear Maria," ſaid Charlotte, "who are generoſity itſelf, may forgive me, but how can I ever be reconciled to myſelf! poor Miſs Fairfax, whoſe only fault, in my eyes, was that of being too lovely, what pains have I not taken to depreciate your beauty, by attributing to art what was purely the work of nature! How often have the elegant, the unaſſuming

Danvers' been the ſport of my unbridled tongue! The charming Lady Eliza Elwin too! whom envy itſelf muſt ſurely admire, ſhe could not eſcape the ſlander I indiſcriminately caſt upon all! and you, my trueſt my beſt friend, how readily did I aſcribe to covetouſneſs an œconomy which aroſe from the moſt worthy of motives!"

"Do not," ſaid Maria, ſeeing Charlotte overwhelmed by the bitterneſs of theſe reflections, "diſtreſs yourſelf by reverting with a ſeverity too great on your paſt errors; it is enough then you are ſenſible of them, and mean to make attonement by your future conduct; remember them now only as they may be neceſſary to ſecure you from a relapſe, and to teach you, while you perſevere yourſelf in the path of rectitude, to view with an eye of pity and compaſſion the failings of others. Detraction is certainly a deteſtable vice; my father has often obſerved to me, that it comprehends many vices, particularly thoſe of envy and injuſtice; "I never

never knew a perſon," ſays he, " fond of detraction, that was not envious, nor did I ever find ſnch a one, in the leaſt ſcrupulous, whether he indulged this vice at the expence of innocence or guilt."

" Surely," ſaid Charlotte, " I ſhall never more be guilty of it! 'Tis indeed odious! but I have ſo long indulged it, that, I fear, I ſhall find it difficult to overcome. You, my dear Maria, muſt be my conſtant monitor."

" Alas!" ſaid Maria, " I am myſelf much in need of a monitor, but we will mutually aſſiſt each other."

This intereſting converſation was here broken off by the entrance of Mr. Shirley, but Charlotte took the earlieſt opportunity of renewing it: from this moment, ſhe ſtudiouſly ſought to cultivate the friendſhip of Maria, by whoſe friendly admonitions ſhe learnt, in time, to view the perfections of others, without envy, to enjoy the world, without being enſlaved by its pleaſures, and to enſure her own happineſs by promoting that of others.

" Clara,

"Clara, who, in the character of Charlotte, ſaw her own ſtrongly depictured, doubted not, but that her aunt had ſelected the ſtory ſhe had juſt finiſhed to reprove and admoniſh her: ſhe was, therefore, ſilent, not knowing what to ſay; till her brother obſerved, what an odious character Charlotte's was, and applied to her for her opinion: ſhe then broke ſilence, and replied, "I am aſhamed to expreſs my hatred of a vice from which I myſelf am not free." Then looking ſignificantly at her aunt, "Ah, madam," ſhe added, "I fear I have loſt your good opinion—I was indeed very illiberal—I was too much like Charlotte in the ſtory—The only fault I could find in Miſs Reeve's work was, that it had too much merit."

"My dear child," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "how I love this charming frankneſs! it is the preſage of every thing great and good: yes, my dear, I ſaw you were not uninfluenced by envy in your obſervations, and

and ſelected for the entertainment of the afternoon a ſtory, which I thought might ſerve to ſet ſo vile a paſſion in its true odious colours."

"I ſee," ſaid Clara, "that envy is indeed a dreadful vice: I hope I am not ſo envious as Charlotte; but I own I do not like to hear other people praiſed."

"That, my dear child," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "be aſſured, is a certain ſign that you are not without envy; be particularly cautious, therefore, of ſuffering it to take root in your heart; the firſt impreſſions may be eaſily eaſily effaced, but envy, arrived at a certain height, is difficult to eradicate; a proper regimen may check the approach of a diſeaſe which, if ſuffered to gather ſtrength, will baffle the ſkill of the ableſt phyſician. The moſt effectual barrier we can oppoſe to envy is a generous intereſt in the welfare of others; accuſtom yourſelf, my children, to liſten to the praiſes of your friends and acquaintances, point out their ſeveral merits and

perfections, and, if you feel a tendency to envy, check it by reflecting that it ſprings from the moſt mean and baſe of all principles, ſelf-love."

"I will endeavour, madam," ſaid Clara, "to follow your councils; for I am ſenſible that envy is an odious vice."

"I do not," ſaid William, who, during this time, had liſtened with the utmoſt attention to the converſation of his aunt and ſiſter, "recollect that I was ever diſpleaſed with any of my ſchool-fellows for excelling me: I always wiſhed to get up to them, and, if I could, before them. I hope, aunt, there is no harm in that."

"No, my dear boy; what you experienced was emulation, a very noble paſſion, which prompts us to aſpire at excellence: Emulation, it is ſomewhere obſerved, ſtrives to excel by *raiſing itſelf* not by depreſſing others."

"I ſhall be very careful, aunt, however," ſaid William, "leſt I ſhould be envious; I ſhall remember what you ſay, and whenever I am angry at hearing another

ther praiſed, think it is high time to be upon my guard."

"Dear William," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "be aſſured you will find an advantage in this; could young people know the pain and miſery they would ſpare themſelves, by thus early checking the approach of envy and ſuch baſe paſſions, no perſuaſions would be neceſſary to lead them to adopt ſo ſalutary a courſe."

The converſation now took a new turn, and different topics occupied the time till tea; after which, Mrs. Mills cauſed a large pair of globes to be brought, and entertained her young friends with a variety of curious particulars, concerning the earth on which we live: ſhe deſcribed to them the cuſtoms and manners of its various inhabitants, and how, in the ſpace of twelve months, it performs its revolution round the ſun, cauſing the variation of the ſeaſons, and, by conſtantly turning on its axis, the change of day and night: ſhe then ſhewed them, on the celeſtial globe, the *ſix planets*, which, in ſtated periods, alſo make

make their revolution round the ſun; and pointed out to them the *fixed ſtars*, which ſhe told them were ſuns, ſuppoſed to enlighten other worlds, in the ſame manner as the ſun we daily ſee enlightens ours.

No entertainment had ever been more agreeable to the young folk than this, eſpecially to Clara, to whom it was quite new; the many intereſting truths, of which Mrs. Mills convinced her, the ſciences of geography and aſtronomy were capable of informing her, created in her mind a ſtrong deſire to ſtudy them; and ſhe went to bed, fully reſolved, when ſhe returned home, to requeſt her father to let her have a maſter.

Clara and William were extremely pleaſed the next morning to ſee that the ſky was clear, and the wet dried from the ground; all nature ſeemed revived, and nothing was now thought on but the expedition, which the rain had the day before prevented.

The coach was accordingly ordered, and ſoon conveyed them to the ſeat of the gentleman

tleman to whom the aviary belonged: Here they were for ſome time highly entertained with the view of a very fine collection of birds, the greater part of them from foreign countries. The beauty and variety of the plumage delighted the young folk, eſpecially Charlotte, who being aſked on her way home (for Mrs. Mills, at the requeſt of her young friends, had conſented to return on foot) to purchaſe a linnet or a blackbird, obſerved to her aunt, that the boy had choſen a very unlucky moment to offer his birds; for, ſaid ſhe, after the beautiful creatures we have juſt ſeen, one cannot condeſcend ſo much as to look at a blackbird or linnet.

"I am ſorry," ſaid her aunt, "to hear you pay ſo ill a compliment to the ſongſters of your own woods."

"Nay, aunt," ſaid Clara, "you cannot think blackbirds and linnets, and ſuch common birds, worthy to be compared with the beautiful foreign birds we have ſeen in the aviary."

"Their plumage may be inferior to many,

many," replied Mrs. Mills, "but what they want in feather, is amply compenſated by the melody of their notes; for my part, I do not envy the inhabitants of the Eaſt, the glittering plumage of the peacock, bird of paradiſe, nor many more, while my ear is delighted by the charming melody of my native woods."

"To be ſure," ſaid Clara, "our birds ſing delightfully; but you muſt allow, there is more to be admired where a beautiful plumage and a fine ſong is united."

"That, my dear," replied her aunt, "ſeldom happens: thoſe birds which have the moſt beautiful plumage are generally found to be defective in ſong; while others whoſe colours are leſs ſplendid raviſh us with the moſt delightful melody—You ſee how equally Providence diſtributes its gifts."

"I ſhould like extremely," ſaid William, "to make a collection of foreign birds, to obſerve the curious thing related of them. Do you know, madam, I yeſterday read, in a book that lay on your dreſſing-

dreſſing-table, of a bird that has a pouch under its bill and throat, large enough to contain ten or fifteen quarts of water! I have forgotten the name of it."

"It is the pelican," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "a native of Africa and America; the pouch you mention is a reſervoir for its proviſion, which it afterwards caſts up and devours at leiſure. This peculiarity gave riſe to the fabulous ſtory, that the pelican fed its young with its own blood."

"Well," ſaid William, "natural hiſtory is a charming ſtudy! I ſhould like extremely to have a collection of foreign birds: what a number of curious things one ſhould have an opportunity of obſerving!"

"You undoubtedly would," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "but as many foreign birds will not exiſt in our climate, and others muſt be purchaſed at a large expence, I would remind you, that your own country will afford you no inconſiderable field for practical knowledge: I have given you more than one example of this."

"Yes,

"Yes, Madam," ſaid Clara, "what you related of the bees was indeed very curious, and the microſcope diſcovered many wonders."

"Very true," ſaid William; "but birds are not like inſects, we can ſee them without a microſcope; and as to thruſhes and linnets, and ſuch birds, they are ſo common, it is impoſſible not to know every particular about them."

"You have then I ſuppoſe, William," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "ſince theſe *common* birds are ſo familiar to you, obſerved the conſtruction of their neſts: Tell me, do you think you could form any thing ſo admirably fitted to the purpoſe for which they are deſigned?"

"The neſts," ſaid William—"The neſts—Why really I don't know—To be ſure, I have taken many, but I never paid much attention to any thing but the birds that were in them—I know they are made of graſs or moſs, or ſomething of that ſort."

"Thus

"Thus it is," ſaid his aunt, "that we daily paſs over a thouſand objects, which, if leſs familiar, would excite our higheſt admiration! But, my dear William, had I known that you had ever committed ſo cruel a theft, I ſhould not have ſuſpected that you had ever conſidered attentively the conſtruction of a bird's neſt, and conſequently the labour it muſt have coſt the little warbler you deprived of it."

William hung his head, and was ſilent —and Clara took this of opportunity of enquiring whether all the birds of our woods built their neſts in the ſame manner?

"All of the ſame ſpecies," Mrs. Mills replied, "build invariably alike, but they vary according to their different kind: The wren, for example, builds her neſt in the form of a ſugar loaf, leaving a hole about the middle for a paſſage in and out, through which ſhe not only ſupplies her young with food, but conveys out all their dung, which would otherwiſe ſoil the neſt. —The titmouſe curiouſly interweaves its neſt with moſs, hair, and reeds—The black-

bird,

bird, lapwing, and many others, rough caſt the inſide of the neſt, with a lay of mortar, and by the help of a little flue or moſs, with which they temper it while ſoft, form a complete wall within.—Many birds connect the different parts of their neſt with a thread, which they weave from hemp or hair, but more commonly from the webs of ſpiders.—When the ſwallow has occaſion to build her neſt, ſhe wets her breaſt upon the ſurface of the water, and ſhedding the moiſture over the duſt, works it up with her bill, and thus forms a plaſter or cement, of which ſhe conſtructs a commodious habitation for her young family. The martin does the ſame, but covers her neſt at the top, leaving a hole at the ſide, for a paſſage in and out."

"There is indeed," ſaid William, "great ingenuity in all this—it muſt coſt the little creatures great trouble and fatigue—I never thought about it before, but it is certainly cruel to deprive them of their little ones, after they have taken

ſuch

ſuch pains to prepare for their reception."

"You would ſay ſo, William," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "if you knew all the cares they undergo; as ſoon as the eggs, which are to produce the young birds, are laid, the male and female brood over them by turns, with the moſt painful perſeverance, and when the young family make their appearance, encounter every danger and fatigue to provide for their ſubſiſtence: they are conſtantly in purſuit of proviſions, firſt one and then the other, and ſometimes both together, and diſtribute the food they bring home with the greateſt equality."

"I thought," ſaid Clara, "that all the care of hatching and rearing the young brood fell to the female."

"It principally does," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "but the male has his part alſo: he alleviates the fatigue of his faithful mate by a thouſand tender aſſiduities: while ſhe is confined to the eggs, he brings her food, occaſionally takes his turn in brooding them,

them, and, when the young birds appear, ſhares equally with her the fatigue of providing them food: I had a male Canary bird, which performed the office of a very kind father to ſome young linnets."

"To ſome young linnets madam!" exclaimed the young folk.

"Yes," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "I'll tell you how it happened. I had once a neſt of linnets brought me by a gardener, who, being lately come into my ſervice, was not acquainted that the feathered tribe are permitted to build unmoleſted in my grounds. As the miſchief could not be remedied, I admoniſhed him as to the future, and took the young neſtlings under my protection. The neſt had not been long in my dreſſing-room, before I obſerved that the chirping the little creatures made, either for food or the warmth of the mother, was anſwered by a fine Canary bird, which hung in the room, with that ſort of ſoft twittering birds uſually make to their young. This inſpired me with the thought of trying whether he would rear the young linnets:

I accord-

I accordingly put the neſt into the cage, and found the experiment ſucceed; my little Phily, for ſo I called my Canary bird, inſtantly left his perch, and brooded over the young linnets, as the mother would have done. I then put ſome proper food into the cage, and had the pleaſure of ſeeing him drop firſt a morſel into the mouth of one, then another, till he had ſatisfied the whole family, which he actually, in this manner, ſupported till they were capable of providing for themſelves."

"How I ſhould have loved the pretty creature!" ſaid Clara; "I have two fine Canary birds at home, I ſhould like extremely to get a neſt of young birds, and try if they would do the ſame."

"Be cautious," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "of trying the experiment, leſt the young birds ſuffer. 'Tis true, it has once ſucceeded, but that is no reaſon it ſhould always; though you have ſeen a cat foſter a chicken, ſuch another inſtance may not occur in the courſe of your life."

"Pray,

"Pray, madam," ſaid William, "would Canary birds do you think live in our woods?"

"By no means," rejoined Mrs. Mills, "our climate is by far too cold, great attention and care is requiſite in the breed- of them even in houſes."

"But in the Canary Iſles," ſaid William, "I ſuppoſe they are as common as blackbirds and thruſhes are with us?"

"Probably they are," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "but their colour there is a duſky grey, and they are ſo different from thoſe ſeen in England, that many people have doubted whether they are of the ſame ſpecies. The Canary birds we ſee here are imported from Germany, where they are bred in great numbers, and ſold to different parts of Europe."

"I have heard my poor mamma ſay," ſaid Clara, "that ſhe once ſaw a Canary bird perform a number of curious tricks, —it fired a little cannon, fell down as if it were ſhot, and what was more wonderful,

ful, ſhewed the colour of every perſon's gown in the room."

I ſaw the ſame exhibition, but, I aſſure you, with more pain than pleaſure.

"Dear Madam," ſaid Clara, "you ſurprize me very much! I think it muſt have been a very entertaining ſight."

"It was beyond all doubt a miracle," rejoined Mrs. Mills, "but ſuch a one as the thinking mind could not contemplate with pleaſure; form to your idea the ſufferings of the little creature before it could be brought to perform feats ſo infinitely above its nature: The man who ſhewed it owned that he had killed thirty by the ſeverity of the diſcipline, before he could bring one to the perfection we ſaw."

"Indeed!" ſaid Clara, "I never heard that."

"Sights of this kind," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "never afford me pleaſure; an animal acting in conformity to its natural inſtinct is, in my opinion, an object far more capable of exciting agreeable ſenſations, than when tortured by the caprice

and ingenuity of man, beyond the limits preſcribed to it by infinite wiſdom. At this moment they arrived at a neat white houſe:

"I have more than once," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "promiſed that you ſhould ſee our ſchool of induſtry; I will now gratify your curioſity:" ſaying this, they entered, and were conducted by Mrs. Brown, whoſe ſtory their aunt had related to them, into the ſchool room, where they ſaw a number of little folk aſſembled, ſome ſpinning, others ſewing, others knitting, and others reading; among the reſt they obſerved Peggy Bartlet, ſeated at the top of the firſt form, a diſtinction which marked the ſuperior merit of thoſe who obtained it.

"Mrs. Mills, with her uſual affability, enquired into the different merits of the young folk, and was extremely pleaſed, when Mrs. Brown replied, they were in general very good children: Obſerving one of them, however, ſet apart from the

reſt,

reſt, ſhe enquired into the cauſe, fearing perhaps that all was not ſo well as it ſhould be."

The little girl, who was the ſubject of the enquiry, hung her head; her cheeks were immediately covered with bluſhes, and Mrs. Brown replied, "that Polly Bennet was doing penance for a fault ſhe had committed three weeks ago, added, that ſhe had reaſon to hope ſhe ſincerely repented."

The little girl upon this, burſt into tears, and aſſured her miſtreſs and Mrs. Mills, ſhe would never more be ſo wicked as to tell a lie.

"I am ſorry," ſaid the lady, "to hear that you have ever been guilty of ſo great a crime; but as your preſent tears, and what your miſtreſs tells me, leads me to hope you are fully ſenſible of it, I ſhall not mortify you by any reflections."

Clara and William, who were affected by the poor girl's tears, interceeded for her very warmly, and requeſted Mrs. Brown, to mitigate her puniſhment, which they

underſtood was to ſet apart from the reſt three weeks longer.

"My good young lady and gentleman," ſaid Mrs. Brown, "I am ſorry to refuſe any requeſt you can make, but I am ſure, when you reflect on the greatneſs of the fault, and are told, that Polly Bennet had got a habit of lying, you will think her puniſhment, in compariſon, very light."

"The little girl ſaid, ſhe was ſenſible, ſhe deſerved to be puniſhed, and that ſhe ſhould not mind what ſhe ſuffered, if ſhe could but once gain the good opinion of her miſtreſs and ſchool fellows; the latter of whom, ſhe ſaid, ſhunned her as much out of ſchool as they did in."

"Mrs. Mills ſaid, ſhe did not doubt, but by perſevering in her good behaviour, ſhe would; but obſerved, that if ſhe had got a habit of lying, it was not to be wondered at that ſhe was ſhunned by her companions: ſhe then took an opportunity of obſerving to the children, that, though ſhe highly commended the abhorrence in which

which they held Polly's fault; yet ſhe wiſhed to remind them that it was not generous to inſult their companion in her diſtreſs, nor to add to the mortifications ſhe already ſuffered by any ſlight or unkindneſs or their part, eſpecially as her repentance and reſolution to amend appeared to be ſincere."

Mrs. Mills and her young friends then wiſhed Mrs. Brown a good day, and purſued their way toward home. Notwithſtanding what had been ſaid, Clara and her brother could not forbear thinking that Mrs. Brown had acted with great ſeverity toward the little girl; for, ſaid William, "I did not underſtand that the lie ſhe told was meant to injure any one." "Prehaps not," replied Mrs. Mills, "but a lie is criminal, be the occaſion what it may. There is a noble ſimplicity in truth, for the abſence of which, the moſt briliant accompliſhments cannot compenſate; while, on the other hand, it adds luſtre to the brighteſt talents, and ennobles the moſt obſcure origin."

Our preſent converſation brings to my mind a ſtory which I will read to you this afternoon.

" How good you are to us, my dear madam," ſaid Clara, " we ſhall always remember, with gratitude, the week we have ſpent with you—it has indeed been a week of pleaſure—but, bleſs me! is not to-day Saturday—did not my papa ſay he would return to-morrow?"

" Yes," ſaid William, " we ſhall have no more ſtories."

" How I wiſh," ſaid Clara, " that we could perſuade papa to let us ſtay another week! how happy we ſhould be! that is to ſay, if it be agreeable to you, Madam, ſaid Clara, addreſſing her aunt."

" My dear children," ſaid Mrs. Mills, " what higher pleaſure can I enjoy, than the ſociety of thoſe ſo dear to me! but we will talk of that when your papa returns, at preſent let us quicken our pace. They did ſo, and were ſoon at home. Dinner ſoon followed, and after the deſert, Mrs. Mills read aloud

THE

THE TRIUMPH OF TRUTH,

A TALE.

" Emily was the acknowledged child and heireſs of Sir James Golding, a wealthy baronet, in the weſt of England :

" Amiable in her temper, gentle in her manners, beloved and admired by all who knew her, ſhe had reached her thirteenth year, a ſtranger to care or misfortune : then, for a while, the calm was interrupted, and ſhe was unexpectedly involved in a ſcene of trouble and perplexity.—A ſervant, for whom Emily had conceived a ſtrong affection, had for ſometime been declining in her health, and, at laſt grew ſo bad that her life was deſpaired of.

" One day, as Emily was ſitting at her bed ſide, ſhe heaved a deep ſigh, and preſſing the hand of her young miſtreſs, with a look that beſpoke a mind diſturbed and agonzed," " my dear child," ſaid

ſhe, " I have ſomething heavy at my heart, which I wiſh, yet dread to communicate—I have been very wicked, but what is done cannot be undone."

" Emily begged ſhe would be compoſed, and tell her if there were any thing ſhe could do to relieve her mind."

" Promiſe me," ſaid Alice, " that you will not diſcover to any one what I am now going to tell you; you are young, but have diſcretion above your years."

" If it be a ſecret, that I can keep with honour," ſaid the prudent Emily, " depend upon my ſilence."

" Alas," ſaid Alice, " it is of moment to your future peace and welfare: but tell me firſt, had you a mother, poor, mean, friendleſs, would you not turn from her with diſguſt and averſion?"

" My good Alice," ſaid Emily, " whither does this queſtion lead: I was never ſo happy as to know a mother; but, if I were, can you ſuppoſe that poverty would not endear her to me?"

" Amiable

"Amiable child!" exclaimed Alice, "in me then"—and here ſhe ſtopped—"in me then behold that unhappy mother."

"Theſe words were incomprehenſible to Emily; ſhe looked on Alice in ſilent expectation of what was to follow—but finding ſhe did not proceed—"Alice," ſaid ſhe, "what does all this mean? you are not light-headed, nor am I ſurely in a dream, yet how can I underſtand you! Did you not ſay ſomething of mother?"

"I did," ſaid Alice, "I am indeed your unhappy mother."

"Impoſſible!" exclaimed Emily, "my mother died when I was ſcarcely a fortnight old: you have ſome ſecret view in this untruth, and want to impoſe on my credulity; my father, as ſoon as he returns, (for Sir James was out upon a journey) muſt be acquainted with this." Having ſaid thus, Emily was riſing with indignation, to leave the room, when Alice, collecting all her ſtrength, caught hold of her gown, and entreated to be heard."

"Emily relented, and ſitting down once more, liſtened to a tale, that agitated her young heart with a thouſand new and painful emotions. The purport was this: Sir James, during his minority, had imprudently contracted a ſecret marriage, and was ſhortly after obliged to ſet out upon his travels: this affected his poor lady ſo much, that ſhe lived only to become the mother of a fine girl, which ſhe committed to the care of Alice, who had formerly been her nurſe, and at whoſe houſe ſhe then lodged. Alice had unfortunately a little girl, within a few days of the ſame age, and this inſpired her with the wicked thought of agrandizing her own child, at the expence of Sir James's. She accordingly gave it the name of Emily, after the deceaſed Lady Golding, and when Sir James, the following year, returned to England, impoſed it on him for his own offspring, which, in the mean time, ſhe called Patty, and bred up as her daughter. Ten years having elapſed ſince this tranſaction, Alice thought it time

to

to profit by her wicked artifice; with this deſign ſhe offered herſelf to ſupply the place of Emily's maid, who had lately left the family, thinking, in this ſituation, to ingratiate herſelf by degrees into the affections of her young miſtreſs, and, when ſhe arrived at years of diſcretion, to intruſt her with the ſecret of her birth, and lay claim to her future ſervices, by repreſenting the ſacrifice ſhe had made in her behalf, or, if this failed, to intimidate her by the fear of a diſcovery: Alice had, however, continued more than three years an inmate of the family, and had not yet ventured to entruſt Emily with a ſecret of ſuch importance. The proſpect, however, of her diſſolution, gave a new turn to her ideas, her crime now ſtood before her in its true deformity; ſhe reflected with anguiſh on the injuſtice ſhe had committed, and though ſhe had not courage to repair the injury ſhe had done, ſhe could not die in peace without recommending Patty, the injured daughter of Sir James, to the care and protection

protection of Emily. Such were the motives which prompt this unhappy woman to the confeſſion ſhe had juſt made, and the reader muſt form to his imagination the effect it produced on the mind of Emily, ſince her emotions were too various, and too powerful, for words to expreſs.

" Shocked at the crime of which Alice had been guilty, yet impreſſed with a high ſenſe of the duty due to her, however faulty, as a parent, Emily could only weep, and in ſilence lament, till the entrance of a ſervant afforded her an opportunity of withdrawing, to calm the tumult of her mind.

" When Emily was alone, and began coolly to reflect on the events Alice had unfolded, her mind was ſtill more diſordered and perplexed:" " What a change," ſaid ſhe, " has a ſhort hour made! but now I thought myſelf the child of Sir James Golding, heireſs to a vaſt eſtate—what am I now? I am afraid to think—Alice, had indeed reaſon to ſay the ſecret was of importance! Should Sir James diſcover it,

it, what will become of me—of my poor mother—I tremble at the thought—but who will acquaint him! Alice ſays my father is dead, no one but ſhe and myſelf know the truth—I will, therefore, think no more about it." Saying this, Emily went into the garden, and began to buſy herſelf about her flowers; from thence ſhe viſited her birds, hoping, by theſe means, to divert her anxiety, but her thoughts inſenſibly returned to the ſubject of her inquietude: "How can I", ſaid ſhe, "look my dear father, for ſhe could not forbear uſing the appellation, in the face, while I am poſſeſſed of ſuch a ſecret. Every kind word or look he addreſſes to me will reproach me—What can I do? Confeſs the truth to Sir James?—he is all kindneſs and indulgence now,—but then—he will no longer love me, when he finds I am not his own Emily: I ſhall forever loſe his affection; that is hard, yet what is ſo bad as falſehood and deceit; it is certainly my duty to confeſs the truth; and how often, as my dear father told

told me, there is no ſatisfaction equal to the performing of it.—But will Alice conſent? ſhe is my mother, and I ought to obey her. I will try if I cannot prevail upon her."

"When Emily returned to the chamber of Alice, ſhe took her hand affectionately between her's," how is it, my poor mother," ſaid ſhe, "are you more compoſed than when we laſt parted—have you ſlept?"

"Alice replied, that it was long ſince ſhe had known compoſure; "the injuſtice I have done," ſaid ſhe, "preſſes heavy on my heart, and I find, too late, that guilt brings along with it its own puniſhment."

"Well my poor Alice," ſaid Emily, "make yourſelf eaſy, there is ſtill a remedy—confeſs the truth to Sir James, his child ſtill lives, and he is very generous and kind—I am ſure I have always found him ſo."

"What is it I hear!" exclaimed the unhappy woman; have you conſidered—"

"I have

" I have conſidered every thing," ſaid Emily, " it is the only reparation you can make; and indeed you owe it both to Sir James, and Patty."

" Think," ſaid Alice, who little expected ſuch a propoſal, " what you will ſuffer, ſhould Sir James, which he certainly will, withdraw his protection from you; think how his confidence has been abuſed; in what a tender point he has been injured—indeed, my child, there is no hope of his forgiveneſs, though innocent, he will not conſider you leſs the cauſe of the impoſition which has been paſſed upon him, and will drive you out to ſhare the poverty of your unhappy mother."

" I do not fear poverty," ſaid Emily, " for riches cannot afford ſatisfaction, if acquired unjuſtly; but I own, the thought of loſing my dear father's, I mean Sir James's affection, affects me ſenſibly;" yet, my dear mother, it is our duty to acquaint him with the truth, and let the conſequence be what they will, to perform it."

" Alice

"Alice ſeemed much agitated; for *mine*, if not for your own ſake," ſaid ſhe, "I charge you to keep the ſecret I have unfolded: I, at leaſt, muſt be the victim of Sir James's reſentment, and think what would enſue, were I, in this weak ſtate, to be turned friendleſs into the wide world."

"This ſuggeſtion touched the tender heart of Emily: no, ſaid ſhe, "Sir James is generous; I will throw myſelf on my knees before him, and ſoften him in your behalf—if I fail, I will conſole you, work for you—and ſhare your poverty; I would not enjoy affluence, were it in my power, while my mother was in miſery."

"Alice was affected, and half perſuaded, by theſe artleſs arguments. Emily obſerved it with joy, but fearing a continuance of the diſcourſe, would be too much for her, in her preſent weak condition, ſhe preſſed her for the preſent, no further, but promiſing to return in a ſhort time, left her to repoſe"

"Though

" Though the mind of Emily was diſtreſſed by a thouſand contending emotions, ſhe felt a peace ariſe from having thus far performed her duty, that ſhe would not have exchanged for all the advantages riches could beſtow; and was enjoying the reflections that aroſe upon this ſubject, when a ſervant entered to acquaint her, that an alarming change had taken place in Alice. Emily haſtened to the chamber, and was inexpreſſibly ſhocked, to find her ſpeechleſs; the phyſician was immediately ſent for, but before he arrived the unhappy ſufferer had breathed her laſt.

" Emily was ſhocked at this unexpected event; but it conſoled her to reflect, that ſhe had, in the laſt interview, apparently rendered her mother ſenſible that it was her duty to make the reparation that was ſtill in her power, though Providence had ſo ordered it that ſhe did not live to accompliſh it; that taſk now devolved upon Emily, and ſhe reſolved, painful as it might be to fulfil it—'Tis true ſhe was more than once tempted to purſue the oppoſite

poſite conduct: "Patty," ſaid ſhe, "cannot feel the loſs of what ſhe never poſſeſſed, and does not know ſhe has a title to poſſeſs; when I am a woman, and have it in my power, I can be kind to her, and provide for her, and that will make her juſt as happy—Then, as to Sir James, he believes me to be his child, and I am ſure loves me as well; and with reſpect to myſelf, I think, I may venture to ſay, Patty could not love and honour him more than I do."—Theſe ſuggeſtions, added to the fear of loſing Sir James's affection, which was inexpreſſibly dear to her, tempted her to confine the ſecret to her own breaſt; but truth, which ſhe had from her infancy been accuſtomed to prize as the moſt valuable poſſeſſion, ſoon ſuggeſted better thoughts, and ſhe reſolved to hazard all, rather than unjuſtly ſupport a character which did not belong to her. She, therefore, met Sir James upon his return the next day, fully reſolved to diſcloſe all, but with an embarraſſment, ariſing from the uneaſineſs of her mind, that did not eſcape his obſervation.

obſervation. He enquired, with affectionate ſolicitude, if any thing material had happened in his abſence?

"Emily bluſhed, and replied, in a tremulous voice: "Poor Alice, Sir, is dead."

"Sir James was ſurpriſed, and enquired when ſhe expired?

"Laſt night, Sir," ſaid Emily, "in my arms—" She could ſay no more, notwithſtanding all the fortitude ſhe had endeavoured to aſſume; ſhe burſt into tears——

"My dear child," ſaid Sir James, embracing her, "I do not blame this amiable tribute to the memory of poor Alice; but death is a debt we muſt all pay; I ſee your ſpirits are low, and for this the beſt remedy is employment: I have brought you a geographical game; let us ſee which of us will make the beſt and moſt expeditious tour of Europe." Saying this, he ſpread the map upon the table, and took out the totum and counters.

"Emily, at his deſire, ſat down, and endeavoured to attend to the rules of the game,

game, but her thoughts inſenſibly wandered, and her abſence of mind was ſo viſible, that Sir James was diſpleaſed.

" Emily," ſaid he, " your concern for a faithful domeſtic is certainly amiable; but it ſhould not cauſe you to forget the attention and reſpect due a parent, who loves and ſtudies every thing to make you happy."

" This was too much for the tender heart of Emily, already oppreſſed with a weight of grief entirely new to her; ſhe burſt into tears, and throwing herſelf upon her knees, and hiding her face with both her hands, entreated him to forgive her.

" Sir James, aſtoniſhed at the agitation of her whole frame, raiſed, and preſſing her to his boſom: " Is it poſſible, my dear child," ſaid he, " that what I have ſaid ſhould affect you ſo powerfully!"

" Ah, Sir," ſaid Emily, ſomewhat relieved by the tears ſhe had ſhed, " do not call me your dear child; indeed, I am unworthy that name."

" Sir

"Sir James was ſurpriſed; but knowing the ingenuous diſpoſition of Emily, judged that her words alluded to ſome trifling fault ſhe had committed in his abſence, and aſſured her of his forgiveneſs.

"I am very unhappy," ſaid Emily; "but thank God I have nothing to reproach myſelf with: O, my dear father!" (for, accuſtomed to this epithet, ſhe unconſciouſly uſed it) "I am very miſerable—I fear you will never again call me your dear Emily.—Indeed, indeed, papa, I am not your own child."

The reader will eaſily conceive what muſt have been the aſtoniſhment of Sir James: when Emily, as well as the agitation of her mind would permit, related all the particulars before mentioned, and put into his hand a letter his lady had addreſſed to him a few days before her death, and committed to the care of the treacherous Alice, who had withheld it, on account of its deſcribing a particular mark which was viſible on the forehead of his child, and

would

would naturally have been ſought for by Sir James.

"His aſtoniſhment and indignation aroſe to the higheſt pitch—For ſome time he walked the room in the utmoſt perturbation of mind—Then turning to Emily, who ſat in trembling expectation of the event, not daring to lift up her eyes to Sir James: "My deareſt child," ſaid he, "my thoughts are at this moment too much diſturbed to pay, as I ought, the juſt tribute to your noble conduct—Leave me for the preſent—In the morning we will meet as uſual."

"Emily withdrew to her chamber, much comforted by theſe kind expreſſions, which left her no room to apprehend the reſentment of Sir James, and gave her reaſon to hope for a continuance of his favour.

"When Emily the next morning was ſummoned to the breakfaſt table, the conſciouſneſs of the new character in which ſhe muſt appear to Sir James gave a timidity and reſtraint to her manners that fully informed him of all that paſſed in her mind:

mind: "My dear Emily," ſaid he, taking her hand in the moſt affectionate manner, "why this reſerve? Can you imagine that an event in which you have borne no part, but what has ſerved to reflect on you the higheſt honour, can have leſſened my eſteem or affection? No, my dear, my noble girl, it has rather encreaſed than diminiſhed both: From henceforth you can have no *rival* in my affections, and Emily is too generous not to admit a partner."

"As ſoon as breakfaſt was over, Sir James diſpatched Rugby, a faithful domeſtic who had grown old in his ſervice, to a village about ten miles diſtant, where Alice had placed Patty during her reſidence in Sir James's family, with orders to pay the money due for her board, and bring her home.—Emily, in the mean while, retired to her chamber, to enjoy the agreeable reflections that aroſe upon her happineſs. How ſincerely did ſhe rejoice in the conduct ſhe had purſued! had ſhe acted with leſs integrity, how bitter had been her reflections! For, with no ſmall

ſurpriſe,

ſurpriſe, ſhe learnt that the diſcourſe which had paſſed between her and Alice had been actually overheard, and when ſhe retired the evening before, related to Sir James by Rugby, whoſe chamber was only divided by a thin partition from Alice's. Had Emily, therefore, acted upon principles leſs noble, the very means ſhe had taken to ſecure to herſelf the fortune and eſteem of Sir James had irretrievably deprived her of both. She looked up, therefore, with gratitude to the Supreme Diſpoſer of events, who had inſpired her with reſolution to hazard the loſs of every worldly conſideration, rather than purchaſe them by duplicity and injuſtice. From ſuch reflections her thoughts naturally turned upon Sir James; on his generoſity and kindneſs—and then on Patty: "I am afraid," ſaid Emily, "ſhe is very illiterate, perhaps as ignorant and vulgar as our waſhing-woman's poor child: how it will vex and mortify my dear father—I wiſh he were not to ſee her till ſhe had been at ſchool a few months. But that cannot be——If it were but poſ-

ſible

ſible to make her appear a little genteel before he ſees her—Let me ſee—Could not ſhe wear ſome of my clothes—To be ſure,——we are juſt of an age."

"Emily was delighted with this thought —the moment ſhe ſaw Rugby, from the window, enter the court yard, ſhe flew to beg he would for a few minutes conceal his arrival from Sir James: Then, over-joyed, ſhe hurried with Patty into her chamber, where ſhe put on her one of her fineſt muſlin frock and a dimity ſkirt—and would have added a cap, had ſhe not been unwilling to conceal her beautiful auburn ringlets, which ſhe thought a greater ornament.

"The artleſs ſimplicity of Patty, who viewed every thing ſhe ſaw with wonder and ruſtic admiration, and the generous anxiety of Emily to embelliſh the perſon of one who, in a mind leſs noble, might have excited ſentiments of envy or jealouſy, formed the moſt intereſting contraſt.

" The buſineſs of the toilet being completed, Emily led Patty to Sir James, who awaited her arrival with impatience. Upon her entrance, he was ſtruck with the ſtrong reſemblance ſhe bore to her mother, and embraced her with the tendereſt affection, ſhedding abundance of tears.

" Patty was quite aſhamed to be kiſſed by ſo fine a gentleman: She had been told that Sir James was her father—but the diſtance that appeared between them, for the preſent, entirely excluded every tender feeling the name might be ſuppoſed to awaken, and glad would Patty have been to hide herſelf in any corner from Sir James.—This baſhfulneſs, however, in a few hours, wore away, and, in her artleſs obſervations, Sir James diſcovered a mind replete with good ſenſe.

" What a mind," exclaimed Sir James, " is here loſt for want of culture!" Some more words he let fall that expreſſed the keenneſs of his ſenſations on this ſubject, which being obſerved by Patty, " Pray, Sir," ſaid ſhe, looking in his face, with a

ſweet

ſweet ſimplicity, "do not be angry with me—To be ſure, I cannot read—nor write—nor play on the muſic, as Miſs Emily can—but indeed I will love you—indeed, Sir, I will."

"Sir James was affected by theſe artleſs expreſſions: "Do not, my ſweet child," ſaid he, "imagine I ſhall love you the leſs for the want of knowledge you have not the opportunities of acquiring; no, if you be good and teachable, you will be equally dear to my heart as if you poſſeſſed the moſt brilliant accompliſhments, which, after all, acquire value only from the virtues by which they are accompanied."

"How happy it would make me," ſaid Emily, "to communicate to Miſs Golding the knowledge you, Sir, have been ſo kind as to give me! Will you permit me, (I will not ſay to be her tutoreſs, becauſe I am ſenſible I am in need of one myſelf) but to aſſiſt in ſo agreeable an employment? Patty has promiſed to accept my ſervices."

"My dear children," ſaid Sir James, "nothing in this world can afford me ſuch heartfelt ſatisfaction as to ſee you amicably united: Yes, my dear Patty, if you would ſecure my eſteem and affection, Emily muſt be the pattern by which you muſt form your conduct."

"Emily's eyes gliſtened with grateful ſenſibility at ſo high a mark of Sir James's approbation; and Patty, taking her hand, ſaid, "Indeed, Miſs Emily, I will mind whatever you ſay—and will love you dearly, for I am ſure you have already been very good to me—" (alluding to the change Emily had made in her apparel, a change which, as it gave another proof of Emily's noble ſentiments, had neither gone unnoticed nor unacknowledged by Sir James.)

"From this day Emily became the the preceptreſs of Patty, whoſe attention and application was ſuch, that ſhe improved rapidly; her mind unfolded by degrees, and every day diſcovered new beauties; her baſhfulneſs changed into a becoming

becoming modeſty, and in a few years the ruſtic cottager was loſt in the elegant, the accompliſhed Miſs Golding.

" The particulars of Emily's birth was known, but to few; ſhe was ſtill conſidered as the daughter of Sir James, who divided his affection and fortune equally, between her and Patty. The friendſhip of the young folk, being, in the mean while, founded upon reciprocal virtues, was ſtrengthened by time, and proved as laſting as it was warm and ſincere."

Thus was the virtue of Emily recompenſed by the approbation of her own heart—the eſteem of her benefactor—the acquiſition of a true friend—and the proſperity of her future life—illuſtrating this uſeful precept; that it is no leſs our intereſt, than our duty, to adopt and encourage good principles.

Clara and William were much entertained with the ſtory their aunt had related,

and aſſured her, they would endeavour to cultivate the ſame integrity that had rendered the character of Emily ſo eſtimable.

The next day being Sunday, they attended their aunt to church, a place which Clara had hitherto conſidered as convenient to lounge away a few hours, on a day the leaſt productive of amuſement of any throughout the week; ſhe had knelt merely becauſe other people did ſo, and repeated the prayers from the ſame motive. During the ſermon and leſſons, ſhe was engaged in criticiſing the perſons and dreſs of the congregation, inſtead of attending to the inſtructions contained in either; but a week paſſed with Mrs. Mills had produced a ſurpriſing revolution: The exemplary conduct of that lady—her diſcourſe, and the habit of aſſembling morning and evening to prayer, had impreſſed her with a high ſenſe of thoſe important duties ſhe owed to her creator, whom ſhe now addreſſed with fervent devotion: ſhe liſtened with attention

to

to an excellent diſcourſe, and retired convinced that ſhe was created for ſomething more than to dreſs, and trifle away her time in frivolous amuſements. In their way home they viſited the Sunday-ſchool, where Clara and her brother aſſiſted their good aunt in examining ſome of the children, whom they rewarded and encouraged according to their ſeveral merits; a new ſpecies of employment this to the young folk, who felt, that no ſatisfaction can exceed that of rendering ourſelves uſeful to others.

From hence the carriage conveyed them home, where they had the pleaſure of meeting Mr. Clement, who had arrived a few minutes before. My dear ſiſter, my dear children, were alternately repeated—and then, a variety of intereſting ſubjects were diſcuſſed. Upon Mrs. Mills leaving the room for a few minutes, Mr. Clement obſerved to the young folk, that he had not exceeded the time in which he promiſed to return.

"Ah! papa," ſaid Clara, "we are always happy to ſee you; but, I aſſure you, we ſhould be more ſo, if it were not to put an end to our viſit!"

"How," ſaid Mr. Clement, "did you not bind me by a promiſe, that it ſhould not exceed a week!"

"Very true, papa," returned Clara, "but then we did not know my aunt, we could not have thought the time would have paſſed ſo delightfully."

"I conclude then," ſaid Mr. Clement, meaning to banter, "that you have had balls, and cards, and viſits, in abundance."

"O, no papa, not one," ſaid Clara, "and yet the time has fled ſo faſt, that I can ſcarcely believe it a week ſince you left us."

"Nor I, papa," ſaid William, "and yet I have not had one play-fellow; nay, I have not ſo much as ſhot one marble; nor once flown my new kite."

"This is very extraordinary," ſaid Mr. Clement,

Clement, ſtill continuing to banter; "I cannot comprehend it."

"O! papa," ſaid Clara, "my aunt is a charming woman, ſhe has been ſo good to us! ſhe has told us all about the bees; and you know, papa, how terrified I uſed to be at a ſpider; well, it is the moſt curious thing in the world! I have ſeen it ſpin; and how many threads do you think it takes to make one that forms the web."

"Upon my word," ſaid Mr. Clement, "I cannot exactly tell."

"rooo! could you think it, papa?"

"The bees," ſaid William, "delight me more than all; my aunt has a glaſs hive, papa, and we have ſeen them bring home the wax and honey."

"But you forget the queen, William," interrupted Clara; "ſhe has a palace, papa, and her ſubjects are ſo faithful!

"We have looked through my aunt's microſcope too; a fly, papa, is a moſt wonderful creature! and the duſt on the wing of a butterfly is actually feathers."

"Indeed!"

"Indeed!"

"Yes, papa, and an earwig has two large wings, that fold up, juſt like our candle ſcreens. Did you know theſe things, papa?"

"I know," returned Mr. Clement, "that nature is replete with wonders."

"How was it then, papa, that you never mentioned them to us?"

"Your brother, my dear, ſaid Mr. Clement, has been abſent, and you never diſcovered a deſire for information on ſuch ſubjects."

"Becauſe, papa," interrupted Clara, "I thought it impoſſible to be amuſed without dreſs or company: but I ſee I was miſtaken, we have neither wanted the one nor the other here. My aunt has made us acquainted with ſo many curious things! and told us ſuch delightful ſtories! I wiſh, papa, you could let us ſtay another week? don't you, William?"

"Yes, ſiſter," replied William, "if my father can ſtay with us, but you know,

I have

I have been at ſchool ſix months, and have had very little of his company."

"Very true," ſaid Clara, "I did not think of that but if papa can ſtay with us?"

"That is a pleaſure," ſaid Mr. Clement, "I cannot at preſent enjoy, as I have engaged your couſin Milfords to to paſs a few weeks with us in town; we muſt ſet off to-morrow, that we may be at home to receive them."

At this moment Mrs. Mills entered; "my dear ſiſter," ſaid Mr. Clement, with a ſmile, "Clara and William have been imparting to me ſome of their new acquired knowledge, and telling me how agreeably you have entertained them."

"I am happy," returned Mrs. Mills, "if they think ſo."

"We ſhould be very ungrateful, my dear Madam," ſaid Clara, "not to acknowledge your kindneſs, we have paſſed a moſt delightful week! Papa, I am ſenſible I have given you a great deal of uneaſineſs—I have been very idle, and inattentive; but I now ſee the value of

knowledge,

knowledge, and am impatient till I have an opportunity of atoning for the time I have loſt."

"How happy," ſaid Mr. Clement, "do you make me by the avowal of ſuch ſentiments! yes, my dear child, I have indeed, with concern, beheld your time daily waſted in frivolous and unprofitable amuſements, and have reproached myſelf as, in ſome meaſure, the cauſe, by improper indulgence: ſhall I confeſs the truth—I opened my heart on this ſubject to your aunt, who kindly invited you hither, in the hope of inſpiring you with a taſte for more rational pleaſures: The diſguſt you conceived to the viſit induced me (too much accuſtomed to indulge your inclinations) to limit it to a week; and little did I expect the happy change ſo ſhort a period has produced."

"Then you knew, Madam," ſaid Clara, "how reluctantly I came hither?—(Mrs. Mills ſmiled) and Clara rejoined, turning to her father, you ſhould not have told *that*, papa."

"When

"When we apply to the phyſician, Clara, for advice," returned Mr. Clement, with a ſmile, "he ſhould be fully informed of the complaint."

"I was neither ſurpriſed nor offended, my love," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "the ideas naturally excited by an old gothic manſion, and a ſolitary aunt, accorded little with the ſprightlineſs of youth; I wiſhed only to convince you, that knowledge and virtue, which give the principal charm to ſociety, can alſo render the moſt dreary ſolitude agreeable, and that the rational and contemplative mind will draw to itſelf, from objects apparently the moſt inſignificant, a ſource of entertainment. This being my deſign, I forbore to introduce you to ſeveral neighbouring families, whoſe ſociety would have enlivened the ſcene; I reſolved, in this viſit, that our pleaſures ſhould reſt more immediately upon ourſelves, and I hope, that the week has paſt neither unpleaſantly nor unprofitably."

"No, indeed, Madam, ſaid the young folk;

folk; the hours have only ſeemed to fly too faſt; Clara then added, "I had no idea that knowledge could be attained with ſo much eaſe; if I had, I ſhould not now, be ſo ignorant."

"Do not deceive yourſelf, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Mills; "*time*, *application*, and *perſeverance*, are neceſſary to the attainment of true knowledge: without theſe, you will acquire only that ſuperficial kind, which, by rendering you conceited, will render you contemptible: My deſign, in our converſations this week, has been to awaken in your mind a taſte for rational ſtudies; 'tis yours to improve it by diligence and perſeverance."

"Ah, my dear Madam," ſaid Clara, "had I you to inſtruct and adviſe me! but that cannot be; papa ſays we muſt really ſet off for town to-morrow morning."

"I have been wiſhing," ſaid Mr. Clement, "that it were poſſible to purchaſe a houſe within a ſhort ride——"

"O! that

"O! that would be delightful," exclaimed the young folk.

"I have a better plan," ſaid Mrs. Mills: "What ſhould prevent thoſe whom intereſt and inclination ſo cloſely unite making one family? This manſion is large enough to contain us all."

"But, my dear ſiſter," ſaid Mr. Clement, "conſider——"

"I gueſs your ſcruples," interrupted Mrs. Mills, "and am prepared to anſwer them. The obligation ſhall be mutual: In the ſummer you ſhall be my gueſt here, and in the winter I will be yours in Portland Place."

"I am delighted with the propoſal," exclaimed Mr. Clement; "but will you, my dear ſiſter, who have for years obſtinately ſecluded yourſelf in this retirement, conſent occaſionally to quit it, and mix again with the world?"

"Yes, my brother," ſaid Mrs. Mills, "what I have refuſed to the repeated ſolicitations of my friends, I now offer as a ſacrifice due to you and to theſe dear children:

dren: I feel that I can be useful to you both; my heart expands in the thought, and I no longer hesitate to pursue the path pointed out to me by new duties."

"How, my dear sister," said Mr. Clement, "shall I express the sense I entertain of your kindness! how discharge so high an obligation?"

"There is little merit," said Mrs. Mills, "in the performance of duties which coincide so powerfully with our inclinations."

"And shall we really, madam," said Clara, "make but one family? What an unexpected happiness!"

"I too," said William, "shall share it with you, sister, in the holidays."

"It is my intention, William," said Mr. Clement, "to take you from school, and to receive a gentleman, with whom I am in treaty, into my family, as tutor to you."

"Well," said William, starting up in an ecstasy, "that indeed will be charming! You shall see, father, how attentive and

and diligent I will be; I ſhall be ſo happy to live at home with you, and my aunt, and my ſiſter!"

The day paſſed thus inſenſibly away, and the next morning, at an early hour, Mr. Clement, with his ſon and daughter, ſet out for London: They bade a cheerful farewel to Mrs. Mills, in the full aſſurance of a ſpeedy return, which took place in the courſe of a few weeks, when having enjoyed the beauties of the country, at the cloſe of the year, Mr. Clement had the pleaſure of conducting his ſiſter, after an abſence of more than twelve years, to the metropolis—From this time the families were united.

Clara, conſcious of her imperfections, by diligence and attention, corrected them; ſhe became gentle, amiable, and accompliſhed; and Mrs. Mills, in whom ſhe ever found an affectionate friend and a faithful counſellor, had, in time, the happineſs of ſeeing every female excellence united in her character—William too, under a judicious preceptor, aſſiſted by the

counſels

counſels of his father, became a worthy man, and an elegant accompliſhed ſcholar.

Thus William and Clara, by their conduct, conſtituted the happineſs of a parent and a friend, whom they loved and honoured: To the end of their lives, they looked back with pleaſure on the week which had taught them the *importance of time*; and convinced them, that it can be no way well improved as in the *practice of virtue*, and the *acquirement of uſeful knowledge*.

THE END.

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM